

## SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION

### **Solicitation of Applications and Notice of Funds Availability for the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program**

- 1. EXPLAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY. IDENTIFY ANY LEGAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS THAT NECESSITATE THE COLLECTION. ATTACH A COPY OF THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF EACH STATUTE AND REGULATION MANDATING OR AUTHORIZING THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION**

This collection of information is a request for an extension of a currently approved submission. This collection of information pertains to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, and was earlier approved under Emergency Clearance procedures by OMB. FRA has revised the information in this collection – where appropriate and necessary – to reflect the best information that it currently has related to this critically important national rail transportation and economic recovery program.

#### Background

After 60 years and more than \$1.8 trillion in investment funding, the United States has developed the world's most advanced highway and aviation systems. During this same period of time, the nation has made a relatively modest investment in passenger rail systems. As congestion on highways and in the air continues to grow and environmental costs mount, there is a growing need for more diverse transportation options.

In 2009, President Obama announced a new vision to address the nation's transportation challenges. He called for a collaborative effort among the Federal government, States, railroads, and other stakeholders to help transform America's transportation system. The President's vision seeks to create an efficient high-speed passenger rail system to connect inner-city communities across America.

Developing a comprehensive high-speed intercity passenger rail network will require a long-term commitment at both the Federal and State levels. The President will jump-start the process with an \$8 billion down payment provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ("ARRA"), \$90 million provided by the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 ("FY'09 Appropriations") and approximately \$1.8 million remaining funds from the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2008 ("FY'08 Appropriations"). The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will administer these funds to applicants with plans or programs that align with the President's key strategic transportation goals: creating safe and efficient transportation choices; building a foundation for economic competitiveness; promoting energy efficiency and environmental quality; and supporting interconnected livable communities. Grants will be awarded along the following four funding tracks:

- Track 1 – Intercity Passenger Rail Projects funded under ARRA. Aimed at “ready-to-go” projects that can be completed within two years of the grant agreement. Projects must make improvements to existing intercity passenger rail services and have independent utility, with an emphasis on economic recovery goals.
- Track 2 – Corridor Service Development Programs funded under ARRA. Aimed at new high-speed rail corridor services or substantial upgrades to existing corridor services. The program will fund a set of interrelated projects that constitute a phase (or geographic section) of a long-range corridor plan – projects will collectively yield benefits greater than the sum of each individual project.
- Track 3 – Corridor Service Planning funded under FY’09 Appropriations and FY’08 Appropriations. Aimed at helping establish a pipeline of future corridor service development projects and programs by advancing corridor planning activities for applicants at an earlier stage of the development process. Track 3 requires 50%, non-federal matching funds.
- Track 4 – Annual Appropriations Funded Projects. Projects with a 50% matching contribution (funded under FY’09 Appropriations and FY’08 Appropriations). This track is similar to Track 1 projects, but for those applicants offering at least a 50% match, Track 4 provides a bonus score for applicants that score well on the risk management criteria.

As President Obama outlined in his March 20, 2009, Memorandum, “Ensuring Responsible Spending of Recovery Act Funds,” implementing agencies are to “develop transparent, merit-based selection criteria that will guide their available discretion in committing, obligating, or expending funds under the Recovery Act.” In order to achieve this goal, FRA created an application process that contains clear selection criteria and evaluation procedures.

The application process is grounded on three key principles: (1) promoting collaboration and shared responsibility among the Federal Government and States, groups of States within corridor regions, and governments, railroads and other private entities; (2) managing, rather than eliminating, risk through program management structure, controls and procedures that permit prudent but effective investments; and (3) ensuring early success while building a sustainable program to meet near-term economic recovery goals while developing public consensus for a long-term program. FRA issued an interim guidance document on June 17, 2009 ([see 74 FR 28770](#)) that explains the application process.

In order to determine eligibility for the ARRA, FY’08, and FY’09 Appropriations funds, FRA has solicited information in the form of applications. In addition, FRA must collect information through reporting, auditing, and monitoring activities from grantees to comply with ARRA and other statutorily mandated requirements.

2. **INDICATE HOW, BY WHOM, AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE THE INFORMATION IS TO BE USED. EXCEPT FOR A NEW COLLECTION, INDICATE THE ACTUAL USE THE AGENCY HAS MADE OF THE INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CURRENT COLLECTION**

The collection of information has been used -- and will be used -- by FRA solely to determine whether an applicant fulfills the requirements and criteria established by statute and agency guidelines to receive financial assistance under the ARRA-related High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (“HSIPR”) Program.

The collection of information – applications, environmental, and other necessary supporting documentation – is used to ensure that grants are awarded to those applicants whose proposed project(s) are most consistent with the eligibility requirements, prioritizing criteria, goals and purposes established in ARRA, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (“PRIIA”) and the FY’09 and FY’08 Appropriations Acts. Specifically, each application under the four designated Track types (Track 1, Track 2, Track 3, and Track 4) is used -- and will be used -- to evaluate and rate projects that deliver transportation, economic recovery and other public benefits, including energy independence, environmental quality and livable communities.

Eligible applications have been reviewed and assessed -- and will be reviewed and assessed -- against six evaluation criteria that are organized into three categories. The first category is **Public Return on Investment**.

Included in this category are the following three criteria:

(1.) Transportation Benefits. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to evaluate projects for improved intercity passenger rail service, transportation network integration (including intermodal connections), and transportation safety benefits. FRA program officials pay especially close attention to each Applicant’s Service Development Plan, noting the business case and assessment of benefits and public investment provided therein.

(2.) Economic Recovery. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to determine the potential in preserving and creating jobs, particularly in economically distressed areas of the country. Required documentation must exhibit quantitative output measures (e.g., service reliability, capacity, and schedule; and transportation data – passenger-miles, including sources – aviation, highway, etc.).

(3.) Other Public Benefits. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to evaluate projects for environmental quality, energy efficiency, and livable communities.

The second category is **Project Success Factors**.

Included in this category are the following two criteria:

(4). Project Management Approach. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to ascertain organizational capacity, track record of comparable projects, adequacy of engineering, reasonableness of schedule, progress toward NEPA compliance, and thoroughness of management plan. In this regard, each applicant's Project Management Plan is particularly important.

(5). Sustainability of Benefits. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to evaluate the sufficiency of safety and security planning, sufficiency of stakeholder agreements, reasonableness of financial estimates, availability of operating financial support, and quality of planning process. In this regard, each applicant's Financial Plan (capital and operating) and Stakeholder Agreements are fundamental.

The third is **Other Attributes**. Included is the following criterion:

(6.) Timeliness of Project Completion. FRA examines applications and supporting documents to appraise project readiness and reasonableness of completion of schedule. In this regard, each Applicant's Project Schedule is critical.

After being assessed against the evaluation criteria, applications for each Track have been – and will be – collectively reviewed to ensure consistency and to balance projects against national priorities and schedules. For this collective review, the FRA Administrator may consider several cross-cutting comparative criteria before final award determinations are made.

Furthermore, as the Federal sponsoring agency, FRA has the primary responsibility for assuring NEPA compliance while accomplishing the purposes, priorities, and requirements of the HSIPR Program. NEPA applies to all federal grant programs and requires all Federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. Agencies must also make information on these impacts and alternatives publicly available before decisions are made and actions occur. Thus, FRA reviews the information collected for NEPA compliance in carrying out its statutory responsibilities.

Multiple awards have been made -- and will be made – under each of the four Tracks. Awards under Tracks 1 and 2 are made using a portion of the \$8 billion appropriated through ARRA. Awards under Tracks 3 and 4 will be made using \$90 million dollars dedicated to Capital Grants to States – Intercity Passenger Rail Service in the FY'09 DOT Appropriations Act, plus the remaining funds appropriated for the same purpose in the Capital Assistance to States – Intercity Passenger Service Program in the FY'08 DOT Appropriations Act (estimated at \$1,893,073 in June 2009).

In sum, the information collected is used by FRA to implement the President's "Vision for High-Speed Rail", facilitate economic recovery in distressed states and localities throughout the country, and to achieve a variety of other cardinal public benefits – most

notably energy independence, environmental quality, and livable communities.

**3. DESCRIBE WHETHER, AND TO WHAT EXTENT, THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION INVOLVES THE USE OF AUTOMATED, ELECTRONIC, MECHANICAL, OR OTHER TECHNOLOGICAL COLLECTION TECHNIQUES OR OTHER FORMS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, E.G. PERMITTING ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES, AND THE BASIS FOR THE DECISION FOR ADOPTING THIS MEANS OF COLLECTION. ALSO DESCRIBE ANY CONSIDERATION OF USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TO REDUCE BURDEN**

FRA strongly encourages the use of advanced information technology, wherever possible, to reduce the burden on respondents. FRA has championed the use of advanced information technology, particularly electronic recordkeeping, for many years. In compliance with both the requirements of the PRA and the Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), FRA encourages electronic submission of application information under the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program. In fact, all grant applications submitted under this program by State Departments of Transportation have been submitted – and will be submitted – to FRA through the Internet at <http://www.grantsolutions.gov>, a consortium grants management system hosted and managed by HHS. Only documents which are impractical to submit electronically, such as oversized engineering drawings, have been permitted – and will be permitted -- to be transmitted to FRA in paper format.

As previously noted, this is still a relatively new program. Consequently, FRA will continue to draw on the best practices and lessons learned from other discretionary grant programs.

**4. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION. SHOW SPECIFICALLY WHY ANY SIMILAR INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE CANNOT BE USED OR MODIFIED FOR USE FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN ITEM 2 ABOVE**

The HSIPR program is a new grant program. Consequently, the information requested is unique and not available in any database.

FRA is committed to establishing a transparent grant program. Because this is a competitive grant process, FRA must ensure that each application is complete and meets all the requirements for receiving an award. Therefore, if an applicant submits two separate applications for funding, the applicant must submit all relevant material for each individual application. In an effort to reduce duplication, FRA has allowed applicants to provide a link to any FRA-specific decisions in lieu of providing the document itself.

**5. IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IMPACTS SMALL BUSINESSES OR OTHER SMALL ENTITIES (ITEM 5 OF OMB FORM 83-1), DESCRIBE**

## **ANY METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN**

Participation is completely voluntary. Eligibility to participate is limited to States and, in certain prescribed circumstances, Amtrak or inter-state compacts. High-speed rail and intercity passenger rail services are large, technically complex, specialized, and very costly investments. Implementation of any conceivable high-speed rail system would, at a minimum, cost hundreds of millions of dollars, exceeding the small business size standards. As small businesses are not expected to participate, no impact on small entities is expected to occur from this collection of information.

### **6. DESCRIBE THE CONSEQUENCE TO FEDERAL PROGRAM OR POLICY ACTIVITIES IF THE COLLECTION IS NOT CONDUCTED OR IS CONDUCTED LESS FREQUENTLY, AS WELL AS ANY TECHNICAL OR LEGAL OBSTACLES TO REDUCING BURDEN.**

The information collected is indispensable to carrying out a congressional mandate designed to implement the President's "Vision for High-Speed Rail" and effectuate economic development and recovery in distressed areas throughout the country. Without the collection of information, FRA would be unable to determine eligibility or evaluate the merit of each application for the HSIPR Program and thus would be unable to disperse the ARRA-related \$8 billion and other vital funds designated in the FY'09 and FY' 08 DOT Appropriations Act.

Congress spelled out specific eligibility requirements for recipients of ARRA and other appropriated funds. In order to ensure applicants meet these requirements, FRA must collect specific application, NEPA, and other information to carry out agency reviews and assessments. Without the information collected for each separate Track of applicants, FRA would have no way of knowing whether these applicants meet the specific criteria spelled out in the agency Guidance published on June 23, 2009, and would have no way to determine the priority and feasibility of proposed projects for award funds. ARRA details specific reporting requirements that a grantee must follow to ensure the funds are used appropriately. Hence, without this collection of information, FRA would be unable to ensure compliance with ARRA and 2 CFR.

Without the collection of information, no high-speed intercity rail projects could be funded at all. Several Congressional mandates would go unfulfilled. DOT/FRA would be in violation of Federal laws and would fail in carrying out its critically important responsibilities. Economically distressed States would continue to suffer high rates of unemployment and underemployment. Businesses would continue to economically stagnate or fail. Commuter transportation between cities would take longer, or be unavailable or be available with limited or undesirable options. Communities along intercity rail lines would not develop and grow, and their sustainability might be jeopardized. The United States would continue to lag behind Japan, France, Germany, China, and other European and Asian nations in the establishment of safe and efficient high-speed intercity rail transportation networks that foster mobility, economic growth,

and an improved human and natural environment that improves the quality of life for its citizens. Without this collection of information, a terrific opportunity to be one of the world's leaders in mass transportation once again would be missed and any future effort might be a long time coming and most likely more costly.

In sum, the collection of information enables FRA to implement critically important Obama Administration, Congressional, and DOT transportation, economic, and human and natural environmental goals and objectives. The collection of information facilitates carrying out ARRA requirements, contributes to the revitalization of States throughout the nation and to the District of Columbia, and promotes and enhances a more modern, safe, and efficient intercity rail transportation throughout the United States. In this, it furthers FRA's goals and objectives, its core agency mission, and the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) Strategic Goals.

**7. EXPLAIN ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD CAUSE AN INFORMATION COLLECTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH 5 CFR 1320.6**

All information collection requirements are in compliance with this section. The solicitation for applications does not require respondents to report information more often than quarterly.

It should be noted that funding provided in program tracks that require ARRA compliance require recipients to adhere to all reporting requirements set forth in ARRA.

**8. DESCRIBE EFFORTS TO CONSULT WITH PERSONS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY TO OBTAIN THEIR VIEWS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF DATA, FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION, THE CLARITY OF INSTRUCTIONS AND RECORDKEEPING, DISCLOSURE, OR REPORTING FORMAT (IF ANY), AND ON THE DATA ELEMENTS TO BE RECORDED, DISCLOSED, OR REPORTED**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FRA published a notice in the Federal Register on August 24, 2009, soliciting comment on this particular information collection. *See 74 FR 42732*. FRA received no comments in response to this notice.

It should be pointed out that FRA conducted extensive outreach with potential applicants to provide clarity and assistance with the application process.

**9. EXPLAIN ANY DECISION TO PROVIDE ANY PAYMENT OR GIFT TO RESPONDENTS, OTHER THAN REMUNERATION OF CONTRACTORS OR GRANTEES**

FRA will not provide a payment or gift to respondents, including remuneration of contractors or grantees.

**10. DESCRIBE ANY ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED RESPONDENTS**

The solicitation requests that applicants use publicly available data or data that can be made public and methodologies, to the extent possible, and that are accepted by industry practice and standards. If the application includes information that the applicant considers to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information, the solicitation directs the applicant to do the following: (1) Note on the front cover that the submission “Contains Confidential Business Information (CBI);” (2) Mark each affected page “CBI;” and (3) Highlight or otherwise denote the CBI portions. The solicitation states that the Department protects such information from disclosure to the extent allowed under applicable law, and notes that, in the event the Department receives a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for the information, the Department will follow the procedures described in its FOIA regulations at 49 CFR § 7.17. The solicitation notes that only information that is ultimately determined to be confidential under that procedure will be exempt from disclosure under FOIA.

**11. ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE**

The solicitation does not request any sensitive information.

**12. ESTIMATE OF THE HOUR BURDEN OF THE COLLECTION AND ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS**

- A. Application Burden. For this one-time collection of information, the grand total of burden hours is 29,050 for all respondents (18,400 + 9,000 + 1,350 +300).

FRA estimates that a total of 259 applications will be received under the HSIPR program.

The number of applications (by Track) is estimated as follows:

Track 1: 184 applications

Track 2: 45 applications

Track 3: 27 applications

Track 4: 3 applications

Because, the majority of the projects submitted for ARRA-related funding (Track 1 and Track 2) are expected to be fairly well-developed, FRA expects that it will generally take applicants and their contractors approximately 100 man-hours for Track 1 and approximately 200 man-hours for Track 2. Applications for annual appropriations funding for planning studies (Track 3) are expected to take applicants and their contractors approximately 50 man-hours per individual application. Applications for annual appropriations funding for construction projects (Track 4, which are similar to Track 1 projects) are expected to take approximately 100 man-hours to complete.



**Track 1:**

Respondent universe:	States
Burden time per response:	100 hours
Frequency of response:	One-time
Annual number of responses:	184 applications
Annual burden:	18,400 hours

**Hours calculation:** 184 applications x 100 hours = 18,400 hours

**Track 2:**

Respondent universe:	States
Burden time per response:	200 hours
Frequency of response:	One-time
Annual number of responses:	45 applications
Annual burden:	9,000 hours

**Hours calculation:** 45 applications x 200 hours = 9,000 hours

**Track 3:**

Respondent universe:	States
Burden time per response:	50 hours
Frequency of response:	One-time
Annual number of responses:	27 applications
Annual burden:	1,350 hours

**Hours calculation:** 27 applications x 50 hours = 1,350 hours

**Track 4:**

Respondent universe:	States
Burden time per response:	100 hours
Frequency of response:	One-time
Annual number of responses:	3 applications
Annual burden:	300 hours

**Hours calculation:** 3 applications x 100 hours = 300 hours

- B. Auditing Burden. Each grantee must meet the audit requirements set forth in the HSIPR Interim Guidance. FRA estimates that 80 applications will receive funding. The auditing process for all grantees, in aggregate, is estimated to take one person working full time approximately 1,920 hours annually. This assumes each grantee will spend 24 hours per audit.

Annual burden: 1,920 hours

**Hours calculation:** 80 applications x 24 hours = 1,920 hours

- C. **Report Burden.** Quarterly each grantee must submit a progress report, financial status report (SF-269), federal cash transactions report (SF-272), and interim/or final report (4 reports x 4 per year = 16 reports). Additionally, grantees must comply with ARRA specific reporting requirements including periodic reports (ARRA § 1201, once per year), job accountability reports (ARRA § 1512, quarterly), and environmental reporting (ARRA § 1609c, quarterly), for nine (9) ARRA-required reports per year. The reporting is expected to take one person eight (8) hours per report for each of the 25 reports. Hence, each grantee will average a total of 200 hours per year for reporting.

**Reporting**

Annual burden: 16,000 hours

**Hours calculation:** 25 reports x 8 hrs. x 80 grantees = 16,000 hours

- D. **Monitoring Burden.** FRA estimates that annually 30 percent of all grantees will receive monitoring, or approximately 24 grantees. The duration of the grant monitoring is approximately two (2) to three (3) days, with an estimated average of 20 hours per grantee monitored. The monitoring process for all 24 grantees is estimated to take one person working full time approximately 480 hours annually.

Annual burden: 480 hours

**Calculation:** 24 monitored grants x 20 hrs. = 480 hours

**Total Estimated Annual Burden** 47,450 hours (29,050 + 1,920 + 16,000 + 480)

13. **PROVIDE AN ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL ANNUAL COST BURDEN TO RESPONDENTS OR RECORD KEEPERS RESULTING FROM THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. (DO NOT INCLUDE THE COSTS OF ANY HOUR BURDEN SHOWN IN ITEMS 12 AND 14).**

**B THE COST ESTIMATES SHOULD BE SPLIT INTO TWO COMPONENTS: (A) A TOTAL CAPITAL AND START-UP COST COMPONENT (ANNUALIZED OVER ITS EXPECTED USEFUL LIFE); AND (B) A TOTAL OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AND PURCHASE OF SERVICES COMPONENT. THE ESTIMATES SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH GENERATING, MAINTAINING, AND DISCLOSING OR PROVIDING THE INFORMATION. INCLUDE DESCRIPTIONS OF METHODS USED TO**

**ESTIMATE MAJOR COSTS FACTORS INCLUDING SYSTEM AND TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION, EXPECTED USEFUL LIFE OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT, THE DISCOUNT RATE(S), AND THE TIME PERIOD OVER WHICH COSTS WILL BE INCURRED. CAPITAL AND START-UP COSTS INCLUDE, AMONG OTHER ITEMS, PREPARATIONS FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION SUCH AS PURCHASING COMPUTERS AND SOFTWARE; MONITORING, SAMPLING, DRILLING AND TESTING EQUIPMENT; AND RECORD STORAGE FACILITIES.**

- B IF COST ESTIMATES ARE EXPECTED TO VARY WIDELY, AGENCIES SHOULD PRESENT RANGES OF COST BURDENS AND EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE VARIANCE. THE COST OF PURCHASING OR CONTRACTING OUT INFORMATION COLLECTION SERVICES SHOULD BE A PART OF THIS COST BURDEN ESTIMATE. IN DEVELOPING COST BURDEN ESTIMATES, AGENCIES MAY CONSULT WITH A SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS (FEWER THAN 10), UTILIZE THE 60-DAY PRE-OMB SUBMISSION PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS AND USE EXISTING ECONOMIC OR REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RULEMAKING CONTAINING THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, AS APPROPRIATE.**
- GENERALLY, ESTIMATES SHOULD NOT INCLUDE PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT OR SERVICES, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, MADE (1) PRIOR TO OCTOBER 1, 1995, (2) TO ACHIEVE REGULATORY COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, (3) FOR REASONS OTHER THAN TO PROVIDE INFORMATION OR KEEP RECORDS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, OR (4) AS PART OF CUSTOMARY AND USUAL BUSINESS OR PRIVATE PRACTICES.**

There are no additional costs besides those detailed in the answer to question 12 of this document.

**14. ESTIMATE OF THE ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The estimated cost to the Federal government of this request for applications and the reporting, monitoring, and auditing costs associated with successful applications is **\$3,264,527**. This cost reflects the need to establish an evaluation team to review each of the applications and make recommendations about which projects to fund. It also includes the cost of the Senior Executive Service employees who will review recommendations and make the final award decisions. Additionally, it includes contractor support, printing, reporting, auditing, and monitoring costs.

- A. FRA estimates that the evaluation team will include 78 people from various agencies and pay grades in the Department. The total estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government for the evaluation team (Senior Executive Service and Staff members) will be **\$550,673**.

Senior Executive Service:

Five (5) Senior Executive Service employees will comprise the evaluations teams. In aggregate, the evaluation process is estimated to take one person working full time approximately 288 hours. The estimated pay for the SES evaluation team members is approximately \$175,000 per year, so the estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government for the evaluation team is **\$24,231**.

Annual burden: 288 hours  
Cost of burden: \$24,231

**Calculation:** 288 hours x 1 year/2,080 hours x  
\$175,000 salary/year = \$24,231

Evaluation Panelists:

73 staff members will comprise the evaluations teams. The evaluation process is estimated to take panelists working full time approximately 8,760 hours. The estimated pay for the evaluation panelists is approximately \$125,000 per year, so the estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government for the evaluation team is **\$526,442**.

Annual burden: 8,760 hours  
Cost of burden: \$526,442

**Calculation:** 8,760 hours x 1 year/2,080 hours x  
\$125,000 salary/year = \$526,442

- B. FRA estimates that assistance will be needed from two contracting companies annually. The total estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government for contractor support will be **\$2,165,000**.

Contracting Support:

Contract 1: cost of burden: \$2,000,000/year  
Contract 2: cost of burden: \$165,000/year

**Calculation:** \$2,000,000/year + \$165,000/ year=  
\$2,165,000/year

- C. FRA does not expect to need any special equipment or support, other than printing. As noted above in item 12, FRA received 259 applications. The approximate average length of each application is 75 pages. FRA printed approximately four (4) copies of each application for the review panels. FRA printed approximately 77,700 pages for the evaluation teams. FRA's printing costs are estimated at approximately one \$.01 per page, which adds up to a total printing cost of **\$777**.

Printing:

Annual burden: 77,700 pages

Cost of burden: \$777

Calculation: 77,000 pages x \$0.01/page = \$777

- D. FRA estimates that approximately 80 applications will receive funding. All grantees must meet the audit requirements set forth in the HSIPR Interim Guidance. An audit is estimated to take one Federal employee working full time approximately 640 hours annually (8 hours per grantee). The estimated pay for this staff member is \$125,000 per year. Thus, the estimated annualized cost to the Federal Government for reviewing 80 audits is **\$38,462**.

Auditing:

Annual burden: 640 hours

Cost of burden: \$38,462

Calculation: 640 hours x 1 year/2080 hours x  
\$125,000 salary/year = \$38,462

- E. Grantees must meet the reporting requirements set forth in the HSIPR Interim Guidance. Quarterly each grantee must submit a progress report, financial status report (SF-269), federal cash transactions report (SF-272), and interim/or final report (4 reports x 4 per year = 16 reports). Additionally, grantees must comply with ARRA specific reporting requirements including periodic reports (ARRA § 1201, once per year), job accountability reports (ARRA § 1512, quarterly), and environmental reporting (ARRA § 1609c, quarterly), for 9 ARRA-required reports per year. The reporting is expected to take Federal employees four (4) hours per report for each of the 25 reports, or 100 hours per year for each of the 80 grantees. The estimated pay for these staff members is approximately \$125,000 per year, so the estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for reporting is **\$480,769**.

Reporting:

Annual burden: 8,000 hours

Cost of burden:	\$480,769
<b>Calculation:</b>	8,000 hours x 1 year/2080 hours x \$125,000 salary/year = \$480,769

- F. All grantees must meet the monitoring requirements set forth in the HSIPR Interim Guidance. One person will perform the function of grant monitoring. FRA estimates that, annually, 30 percent of all grantees will receive monitoring (80 x .3 = 24 grantees). The monitoring process is estimated to take one Federal employee working full time approximately 480 hours annually. The estimated pay for this staff member is approximately \$125,000 per year, so the estimated annualized cost to the Federal government for monitoring is **\$28,846**.

Monitoring:

Annual burden:	480 hours
Cost of burden:	\$28,846

Calculation:	480 hours x 1 year/2080 hours x \$125,000 salary/year = \$28,846
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- G. Total cost:

Senior Executive Services:	\$24,231
Evaluation panelists:	\$526,442
Contract support:	\$2,165,000
Printing:	\$777
Audit:	\$38,462
Reporting:	\$480,769
Monitoring	\$28,846

**TOTAL COST: \$3,264,527/year**

**15. EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR ANY PROGRAM CHANGES OR ADJUSTMENTS REPORTED IN ITEMS 13 OR 14 OF THE OMB FORM 83-1.**

This is a revision to a previous information collection submission that was approved under Emergency Clearance procedures. The total burden has increased by 33,950 hours from the previous submission. The increase is due to solely to **adjustments**.

The following reflect **adjustments**:

(1.) Applications. FRA revised its estimate of the number of applications received for each of the four Track categories. Previously, FRA had estimated that there would be approximately 75 Track 1 applications, and 20 applications for Tracks 2, 3, and 4 or a total of 135 applications. In this submission, FRA estimates that there will be

approximately 184 Track 1 applications, 45 Track 2 applications, 27 Track 3 applications, and three (3) Track 4 applications or a total of 25 applications. The total burden for the earlier estimated 135 applications amounted to 13,500 hours, while the total burden for the present estimated 259 applications amounts to 29,050. Hence, there is a burden *increase* of 15,550 hours.

(2.) Although these are not new HSIPR requirements, previously FRA did not account for applicants auditing burden, report burden, and monitoring burden. The estimated burden for each of these is as follows: 1,920 hours; 16,000 hours; and 480 hours, respectively, or a total *increase* of 18,400 hours.

The current OMB inventory reflects a total burden of 13,500 hours, while the present submission exhibits a total burden of 47,450 hours. Hence, there is a total burden increase of 33,950 hours.

There is no change in cost to respondents from the previous submission.

**16. PLANS FOR TABULATION AND PUBLICATION**

There are no plans for publication of applications and other documentation comprising this collection of information. The information collected will be used exclusively for purposes of determining eligibility for the High-Speed Rail Corridors and Intercity Passenger Rail Service-Capital Assistance and Planning Grants Program and awarding program funds.

**17. IF SEEKING APPROVAL NOT TO DISPLAY THE EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL, EXPLAIN THE REASONS**

Not applicable.

**18. EXPLAIN ANY EXCEPTIONS TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

No exceptions are taken at this time.

## Meeting Department of Transportation (DOT) Strategic Goals

This information collection supports all five of DOT strategic goal, especially economic growth. The information collected is indispensable to carrying out a congressional mandate designed to implement the President's "Vision for High-Speed Rail" and effectuate economic development and recovery in distressed areas throughout the country. The information collected will enable FRA to determine eligibility or evaluate the merit of each application for the HSIPR Program and thus will facilitate the disbursement of the ARRA-related \$8 billion and other vital funds designated in the FY'09 and FY' 08 DOT Appropriations Act to successful awardees among the 50 States and Amtrak.

The collection of information for awarding HSIPR funds also promotes the goal of safety and mobility. Specifically, under Track 1, successful projects receiving grants must make improvements to existing intercity passenger rail services. Upgraded services will include transportation network integration and other technological improvements in the daily passenger rail operational environment that will promote safe and efficient travel for passengers between desired destination points. The improvement of existing high-speed rail corridors and the development of new high-speed rail corridors will enhance safety by eliminating dangerous rail grade crossings along these important transportation arteries that are too frequently the scene of collisions and derailments with concomitant injuries, fatalities, and property damage. Improvement of existing high-speed rail corridors and development of new high-speed rail corridors under Track 2 and Track 3 grants will also promote mobility by enabling riders to travel more quickly from city to city and by providing more attractive options for individuals who previously might have traveled by car or plane to their destination.

With the successful awarding of funds for all four Track applicants, the collection of information promotes human and natural environment by increasing the likelihood that Americans will travel by train to their intercity destinations and avoid travel by plane and car, which tend to create much more air and noise pollution and thus have a much more deleterious effect on the quality of the environment. Also, train travel will enhance the quality of life for many thousands of Americans who find plane and car trips extremely stressful and expensive.

Finally, the collection of information enhances National Security by the establishment of modern, secure, and efficient high-speed rail corridors throughout the nation that can serve to move troops and supplies in the event of national emergency or natural disasters. During such times, the ability to safely and quickly move men and material can make all the difference in meeting these challenges in an effective and timely manner.

In sum, the collection of information enables FRA to implement critically important Obama Administration, Congressional, and DOT transportation, economic, and human and natural environmental goals and objectives. The collection of information facilitates



carrying out ARRA requirements, contributes to the revitalization of States throughout the nation and to the District of Columbia, and promotes and enhances a more modern, safe, and efficient intercity rail transportation throughout the United States. In this, it furthers FRA's goals and objectives, its core agency mission, and the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) Strategic Goals.