

SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION
Notice of Revisions to Grants and Close-Out Procedures for Grants
under the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program
OMB No. 2130-0580

Summary

- There is a reduction in burden hours for this collection as no new applications are being accepted as this time.
- This renewal submission is a request for a revision to the previously approved submission by OMB on January 25, 2010 and which expires on January 31, 2013.
- The total number of burden hours requested for this submission is 1,048 hours.
- The total number of burden hours previously approved was 4,875 hours.
- Adjustment decreased the burden by a total of 3,827 hours.

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.**

Background

The Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Program Number 20.314), which was originally supported with up to \$20,000,000 of Federal funds provided to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as part of the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009 (Pub. L. 110-329, September 30, 2008). On May 27, 2009, FRA selected 12 projects, totaling \$15 million under this program. On August 5, 2010, FRA selected 10 more projects for the remaining funds. A few revisions to current grant agreements and close-out of grants are the only remaining activities for this program, as no additional funding is available for grant projects under this program.

Funds provided under this Program may constitute no more than 80 percent of the total cost of a selected project, with the remaining cost funded from other non-Federal sources. Projects include repairs and rehabilitation to Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure damaged by hurricanes, floods, and natural disasters that are located in counties that were identified in a Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance issued by the President (<http://www.fema.gov/news/disasters.fema#sev1>).

Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure repaired and rehabilitated include railroad rights-of-way, bridges, signals and other infrastructure which are part of the general railroad system of transportation and primarily used by railroads to move freight traffic. FRA anticipates that no further public notification will be made with respect to this Program.

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 information collected will be used solely by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) staff (and potentially contractors) for revisions and to close-out grants by statute and agency guidelines. The collection of information has been used and will continue to be used by FRA to ensure that grants are consistent with the requirements, and goals and purposes established in the appropriating statute. Thus, the collection of information will provide the means for the agency to make the most well informed decisions regarding the revisions and close-out of the prescribed statutory grant money, and will facilitate prompt aid to eligible States and communities affected by recent natural disasters for needed railroad rehabilitation and improvement projects.

FRA will use the information collected to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes are complied with by States with Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair funds. Additionally, FRA will use the information collected to monitor various aspects of agency approved Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair projects, including the progress and the completion or final performance of individual projects, the financial status of projects that detail outlays and requests for reimbursement for physical construction, final requests for payment, patent disclosure (if applicable), and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. Finally, FRA will use the required reports mandated in the close-out procedures to determine whether State governments have complied with the requirement that an approved project that is completed have a full inspection of all construction work and, if a project is not completed, the details as to why the project was not completed. This monitoring and follow-up information is essential if FRA is to carry-out the Congressional mandate and ensure that Federal grant money is used appropriately and effectively.

3. DESCRIBE WHETHER, BY WHOM, 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 supports and highly encourages the use of advanced information technology, wherever possible, to reduce burden on respondents. FRA has championed the use of advanced information technology, particularly electronic recordkeeping, for many years now. In compliance with both the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) and Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA), FRA provides for electronic submission of application information under the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program. In fact, all grant applications submitted under this program by State departments of transportation must be submitted to FRA through the Internet at <http://www.grants.gov>. Only documents which are

impractical to submit electronically, such as oversized engineering drawings, will be permitted to be transmitted to FRA in paper format.

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 Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program was a new program. The requirements were developed for the sole purpose of supporting this specific grant program. To our knowledge, this information is not duplicated anywhere.

Similar data are not available from any other source.

5. IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IMPACTS SMALL BUSINESSES OR OTHER SMALL ENTITIES (ITEM 5 OF OMB FORM 83-I), DESCRIBE ANY METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN.

Participation in the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program was completely voluntary. Project eligibility was limited, by statute, to 39 States with counties that the President declared a major disaster after January 1, 2008, under Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974. As such, no small businesses or other small entities are anticipated to be impacted by 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.

If this information were not collected or collected less frequently, FRA would be unable to fulfill a Congressional mandate. Specifically, without this collection of information, FRA would be unable to ensure that all requirements for the Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair Grant Program are met, particularly the requirement that non-program funds pay at least 20 percent of the shared costs of a project.

Without this collection of information, FRA would have no way to monitor various aspects of agency approved Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair projects, including the progress and the completion or final performance of individual projects, the financial status of the project that details outlays and requests for reimbursement for physical construction, final requests for payment, patent disclosure (if applicable), and condition of Federally-owned property (if applicable) that are included in required close-out reports by State governments. Also, without this collection of information and the required reports mandated in the close-out procedures, FRA would have no way to determine whether State governments had complied with the requirement that an approved project that is completed have a full inspection of all construction

work and would have no way to know, if a project were not completed, the details why the project was not completed. This monitoring and follow-up information is essential if FRA is to carry-out the Congressional mandate and ensure that Federal grant money is used appropriately and effectively.

In sum, the collection of information enables FRA to fulfill a Congressional mandate, contributes to eligible economic development of various States and communities affected by hurricanes, floods and natural disasters, and facilitates the rehabilitation and repair of eligible structures/projects so as to ensure safe rail transportation throughout those States and indeed the country at large. In this, it furthers the Department of Transportation's (OT) goals and objectives, as well as FRA's own core mission.

- 7. EXPLAIN ANY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD CAUSE AN INFORMATION COLLECTION TO BE CONDUCTED IN A MANNER:**
- **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO REPORT INFORMATION TO THE AGENCY MORE OFTEN THAN QUARTERLY;**
 - **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO PREPARE A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO A COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IN FEWER THAN 30 DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF IT;**
 - **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO SUBMIT MORE THAN AN ORIGINAL AND TWO COPIES OF ANY DOCUMENT;**
 - **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO RETAIN RECORDS, OTHER THAN HEALTH, MEDICAL, GOVERNMENT CONTRACT, GRANT-IN-AID, OR TAX RECORDS FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS;**
 - **IN CONNECTION WITH A STATISTICAL SURVEY, THAT IS NOT DESIGNED TO PRODUCE VALID AND RELIABLE RESULTS THAT CAN BE GENERALIZED TO THE UNIVERSE OF STUDY;**
 - **REQUIRING THE USE OF A STATISTICAL DATA CLASSIFICATION THAT HAS NOT BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY OMB;**
 - **THAT INCLUDES A PLEDGE OF CONFIDENTIALITY THAT IS NOT SUPPORTED BY AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED IN STATUTE OR REGULATION, THAT IS NOT SUPPORTED BY DISCLOSURE AND DATA SECURITY POLICIES THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PLEDGE, OR WHICH UNNECESSARILY IMPEDES SHARING OF DATA WITH OTHER AGENCIES FOR COMPATIBLE CONFIDENTIAL USE; OR**
 - **REQUIRING RESPONDENTS TO SUBMIT PROPRIETARY TRADE SECRET, OR OTHER CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION UNLESS THE AGENCY CAN**

DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS INSTITUTED PROCEDURES TO PROTECT THE INFORMATION'S CONFIDENTIALITY TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW.

All the information collection requirements associated with this submission are in compliance with this section.

- 8. IF APPLICABLE, PROVIDE A COPY AND IDENTIFY THE DATE AND PAGE NUMBER OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER OF THE AGENCY'S NOTICE, REQUIRED BY 5 CFR 1320.8(d), SOLICITING COMMENTS ON THE INFORMATION COLLECTION PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO OMB. SUMMARIZE PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THAT NOTICE AND DESCRIBE ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE AGENCY IN RESPONSE TO THOSE COMMENTS. SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS COMMENTS RECEIVED ON COST AND HOUR BURDEN.**

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.

CONSULTATION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE FROM WHOM INFORMATION IS TO BE OBTAINED OR THOSE WHO MUST COMPILE RECORDS SHOULD OCCUR AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 3 YEARS--EVEN IF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ACTIVITY IS THE SAME AS IN PRIOR PERIODS. THERE MAY BE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY PRECLUDE CONSULTATION IN A SPECIFIC SITUATION. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD BE EXPLAINED.

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FRA published a Notice in the **Federal Register** on June 20, 2012, soliciting comment on this particular collection of information. *77 FR 37092*. FRA received no comments in response to this notice.

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

There are no monetary payments provided or gifts made to respondents in connection with this collection of information.

- 10. DESCRIBE ANY ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS AND THE BASIS FOR THE ASSURANCE IN STATUTE, REGULATION, OR AGENCY POLICY.**

Information collected is not of a confidential nature, and FRA pledges no confidentiality.

11. **PROVIDE ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION FOR ANY QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE, SUCH AS SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, AND OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE COMMONLY CONSIDERED PRIVATE. THIS JUSTIFICATION SHOULD INCLUDE THE REASONS WHY THE AGENCY CONSIDERS THE QUESTIONS NECESSARY, THE SPECIFIC USES TO BE MADE OF THE INFORMATION, THE EXPLANATION TO BE GIVEN TO PERSONS FROM WHOM THE INFORMATION IS REQUESTED, AND ANY STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO OBTAIN THEIR CONSENT.**

There are no questions or information of a sensitive nature or data that would normally be considered private contained in this information collection.

12. **PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF THE HOUR BURDEN OF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. THE STATEMENT SHOULD:**

- **INDICATE THE NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS, FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE, ANNUAL HOUR BURDEN, AND AN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE BURDEN WAS ESTIMATED. UNLESS DIRECTED TO DO SO, AGENCIES SHOULD NOT CONDUCT SPECIAL SURVEYS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON WHICH TO BASE HOUR BURDEN ESTIMATES. CONSULTATION WITH A SAMPLE (FEWER THAN 10) OF POTENTIAL RESPONDENTS IS DESIRABLE. IF THE HOUR BURDEN ON RESPONDENTS IS EXPECTED TO VARY WIDELY BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCES IN ACTIVITY, SIZE, OR COMPLEXITY, SHOW THE RANGE OF ESTIMATED HOUR BURDEN, AND EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE VARIANCE. GENERALLY, ESTIMATES SHOULD NOT INCLUDE BURDENS HOUR FOR CUSTOMARY AND USUAL BUSINESS PRACTICES**
- **IF THIS REQUEST FOR APPROVAL COVERS MORE THAN ONE FORM, PROVIDE SEPARATE HOUR BURDEN ESTIMATES FOR EACH FORM AND AGGREGATE THE HOUR BURDENS IN ITEMS 13 OF OMB FORM 83-I.**
- **PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS FOR THE HOUR BURDENS FOR COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION, IDENTIFYING AND USING APPROPRIATE WAGE RATE CATEGORIES. THE COST OF CONTRACTING OUT OR PAYING OUTSIDE PARTIES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION ACTIVITIES SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED HERE. INSTEAD, THIS COST SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN ITEM 14.**

Note: Based on the language in Public Law 110-329, which stipulates that 80 percent of the cost of rehabilitation and repairs to Class II and Class III railroad infrastructure damaged by hurricanes, floods, and natural disaster that are located in counties identified in a Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance by the President under Title IV of the Robert T. Stafford

Disaster Relief and Emergency Act of 1974 are eligible for the Congressionally mandated grant program, respondent universe is estimated at 39 States.

A. Revisions to Grants

Due to the limited amount of money in this grant program, FRA believes that it will request approximately two of the 22 grants to submit amendments to the agency (with any necessary supporting documentation) in order to refine the scope of the proposed project. It is estimated that it will take approximately 40 hours to prepare and electronically transmit the amendment to the agency. Total annual burden for this requirement is 80 hours.

Respondent Universe:

22
States/Local
government

Burden time per response:

40
hours

Frequency of Response:

Yearly

Annual number of Responses: 2 grant revisions

Annual Burden: 80 hours

Calculation: 2 grant revisions x 40 hrs. = 80 hours

Total annual burden for this entire requirement is 80 hours.

B. Progress/Financial Reports

The Grantee shall furnish four quarterly Progress/Financial Reports to FRA on or before the 30th calendar day of the month following the end of the quarter being reported.

Respondent Universe:

22
States/Local
government

Burden time per response:

2 hours

Frequency of Response:

Quarterly

Annual number of Responses: 22 Grantees

Annual Burden: 176 hours

Calculation: 22 grantees x 4 reports per year x 2 hrs. per report = 176 hours

Total annual burden for this entire requirement is 176 hours.

C. Close-Out Procedures

1. Within 90 days after the expiration or termination of the grant, the state must submit to FRA any or all of the following information, depending on the terms of the grant: (1) Final performance or progress report; (2) Financial Status Report (SF-269) or Outlay Report and Request for Reimbursement for Construction Programs (SF-271); (3) Final Request for Payment (SF-270); (4) Patent disclosure (if applicable); and (5) Federally-owned Property Report (if applicable).

FRA estimates that the 22 grantees will complete the necessary close-out documents stipulated under the above requirement. It is estimated that it will take approximately sixteen (16) hours to complete all (each set) of the prescribed forms/reports. Total annual burden for this requirement is 352 hours.

Respondent Universe:

22
States/Local
government

Burden time per response:

16
hours

Frequency of Response:

One

Annual number of Responses:

22 sets of close-out documents

Annual Burden:

352 hours

Calculation: 22 sets of close-out documents x 16 hrs. = 352 hours

2. If the project is completed, within 90 days after the expiration or termination of the grant, the state must complete a full inspection of all construction work completed under the grant and submit a report to FRA. If the project is not completed, the state must submit a report detailing why the project was not completed.

FRA estimates that all 22 grantees will complete the reports prescribed under the above requirement. It is estimated that it will take approximately 20 hours to complete the necessary construction and inspection report. Total annual burden for this requirement is 800 hours.

Respondent Universe:

22
States/Local
government

Burden time per response:

20

Frequency of Response:		Once	hours
Annual number of Responses:	22 reports		
Annual Burden:		440 hours	

Calculation: 22 reports x 20 hrs. = 440 hours

Total burden for this information collection requirement is 792 hours (352 + 440).

The total burden for this entire information collection is 1048 hours.

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

- **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.**
- **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 to respondents resulting from the proposed collection of information.

- 14. PROVIDE ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. ALSO, PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD USED TO ESTIMATE COSTS, WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE QUANTIFICATION OF HOURS, OPERATIONAL EXPENSES SUCH AS EQUIPMENT, OVERHEAD, PRINTING, AND SUPPORT STAFF, AND ANY OTHER EXPENSE THAT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN INCURRED WITHOUT THIS COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. AGENCIES ALSO MAY AGGREGATE COST ESTIMATES FROM ITEMS 12, 13, AND 14 IN A SINGLE TABLE.**

FRA estimates the cost to the Federal government to implement Revisions to Grants and Close-out Procedures at approximately \$3,110 per grant. The cost is calculated as follows:

FRA estimates that two agency employees, one financial analyst and engineer at the GS-14 (\$128.00 per hour including overhead costs) will typically work on revisions to grant and close-out review for each grant. The revisions and close out will take approximately 16 hours for the financial analyst and 8 hours for the engineer to complete for each grant. In addition to the labor cost, there is an estimated cost of \$35 for supplies. Thus, the cost to the Federal government is \$3,107 or \$ 3,110 per grant (rounded off). The total cost for the twenty (22) grants are as follows:

TOTAL COST

22 grants @ \$3,110 = \$68,420

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

There is a reduction in burden from the previously approved information collection submission because no additional applications are being solicited or reviewed.

- 16. FOR COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION WHOSE RESULTS WILL BE PUBLISHED, OUTLINE PLANS FOR TABULATION, AND PUBLICATION. ADDRESS ANY COMPLEX ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES THAT WILL BE USED. PROVIDE THE TIME SCHEDULE FOR THE ENTIRE PROJECT, INCLUDING BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES OF THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION, COMPLETION OF**

REPORT, PUBLICATION DATES, AND OTHER ACTIONS.

There are no plans for publication of this submission. The information will be used exclusively for purposes of determining compliance with U.S. laws and FRA safety regulations, and to amend and close-out the program. .

17. IF SEEKING APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY THE EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTION, EXPLAIN THE REASONS THAT DISPLAY WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE.

FRA is not requesting approval to NOT display OMB expiration date for this information collection.

18. EXPLAIN EACH EXCEPTION TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT IDENTIFIED IN ITEM 19, "CERTIFICATION FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSIONS," OF OMB FORM 83-I.

No exceptions are taken at this time.

Meeting Department of Transportation (DOT) Strategic Goals

This information collection supports all five DOT strategic goals. First, it supports the Department's highest strategic goal, namely transportation safety. Without this collection of information, FRA would have no way to disburse the remaining funds provided by Congress in the Act so that rail infrastructure damaged by hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters can be rehabilitated and repaired, as needed. Without rehabilitating and repairing damaged rail infrastructure, there would most likely be increased numbers of accidents and incidents and casualties that usually accompany them.

Second, this information collection supports the DOT strategic goal of mobility. By being able to award program grant funds properly, FRA can ensure that damaged rail infrastructure in these affected States is properly rehabilitated and repaired so as to allow the continued movement of people along these vital State transportation arteries. This contributes to mobility within that affected State and throughout the country at large by providing a rail transportation option for residents and by providing a rail connection to other States.

Third, this information collection supports economic growth. By being able to spend the program grant funds properly, FRA can provide a much needed economic stimulus to States and businesses severely impacted by hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters. By rehabilitating and repairing damaged rail infrastructure, more businesses will be engaged and more people will be employed to carry out these projects. Increased employment will contribute to the overall economic well-being of affected States by providing new customers for businesses and new taxpayers for the State. Also, completed projects will restore vital rail links allowing more goods and more people to be moved and thus bringing additional goods and people to businesses situated along critical rail transportation arteries.

Fourth, this information collection supports the human and natural environment strategic goal in a very important way. Without this collection of information, FRA would have no way to ensure that all applicable Federal statutes are complied with to enable FRA to provide Railroad Rehabilitation and Repair grant funds. By fulfilling these responsibilities, FRA acts to protect communities and the natural environment affected by project awards in eligible States.

Finally, this information collection supports national security by ensuring that there no discontinuous rail links in States affected by hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters. Thus, in the event of national need or security threat, the Federal Government would be able to move troops, supplies, and equipment to protect lives and property.

In sum, the proposed collection of information enables FRA to fulfill a Congressional mandate, contributes to eligible economic development of various States affected by hurricanes, floods and natural disasters, and facilitates the rehabilitation and repair of eligible structures/projects so as to ensure safe rail transportation throughout those States and indeed the country at large. In this, it furthers DOT's goals and objectives as well as FRA's own core mission.

In this information collection as in all its information collection activities, FRA seeks to do its very best to fulfill DOT Strategic Goals and to be an integral part of One DOT.