

Supporting Statement for Paperwork Reduction Act Submission

United States Rail Service Issues – Performance Data Reporting

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) seeks approval for its proposed revisions to previously proposed information collections requiring the seven Class I (large) railroads to publicly file various data reports pertaining to service performance, primarily on a weekly basis. This data is intended to give both the Board and its stakeholders access to near real-time information about the operations and performance of the Class I railroads, and the fluidity of the Chicago gateway. In addition, the data is expected to assist rail shippers in making logistics decisions, planning operations and production, and mitigating losses when challenging railroad operating issues arise. This data will be published on the Board's website for the benefit of the Board, carriers, shippers, and the general public.

A. Justification

1. Need for Information

The Board is, by statute, responsible for the economic regulation of common carrier railroads operating in the United States. The shipping community and our economy as a whole depend on reliable and efficient freight rail service. The proposed information collections would allow the Board to better understand current service issues and potentially to identify and resolve possible future regional and national service disruptions more quickly, as well as determine whether more granular data is needed. Transparency would also benefit rail shippers and stakeholders, by allowing them to better plan operations and make informed business decisions based on publicly-available, near real-time data and their own analysis of performance trends over time.

2. Use of Data Collected

The Board will use this information to monitor Class I railroad performance, identify and assess service issues as they arise, and, when necessary, address issues as quickly and efficiently as possible.

3. Reduction through Improved Technology

Respondents will email their responses to the Board.

4. Identification of Duplication

The Board is the only agency tasked with the economic regulation of freight railroads. This information is not duplicated by any other agency.

5. Minimizing Burden for Small Businesses

No small entities will be affected by the collection of this information. Only Class I railroads, which have operating revenues in excess of \$250 million (1991 dollars) adjusted for inflation, will be subject to this reporting requirement.

6. Frequency Reduction Consequences

Less frequent collections would fail to provide as near real-time information about rail service issues and thus would hinder the Board's ability to address these issues. It would also provide less insight into variations in performance. The purpose of the collections is to obtain more frequent data on freight rail service.

7. Special Circumstances

No special circumstances apply to these collections.

8. Consultation Outside Agency

The Board published in the Federal Register a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on January 6, 2015, which provided for an approximately 60-day comment period (and an additional approximately 60-day period for reply comments) regarding proposed collections of similar data, with specific reference to concerns detailed in the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521 and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 C.F.R. § 1320.8(d)(3). See U.S. Rail Serv. Issues—Performance Data Reporting, EP 724 (Sub-No. 4), 80 Fed. Reg. 473 (Jan. 6, 2015). In response to comments received, the Board has revised its proposal and is now publishing in the Federal Register a revised Notice of Proposed Rule Making, which provides for an approximately 60-day comment period (and an additional approximately 60-day period for reply comments) regarding its revised proposal for this data collection. See U.S. Rail Serv. Issues—Performance Data Reporting, EP 724 (Sub-No. 4), 81 Fed. Reg. 32268 (May 23, 2016).

9. Payment or Gift

No payment or gift is made in connection with these collections.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The collections are posted on the Board's website.

11. Sensitive Information

The collections do not collect sensitive information.

12. Estimated Burden Hours.

The recurring burden hours are estimated to be no more than 1,182 hours per year, as derived in the table below. In addition, there are some one-time, start-up costs of approximately 2 hours for each respondent filing a quarterly report that must be added to the first year's total burden hours. To avoid inflating the estimated total annual hourly burden, the two-hour start-up burden has been divided by three and spread over the three-year approval period. Thus, the total annual burden hours for each of the three years are estimated at no more than 1,186.67 hours per year.

Table – Total Burden Hours (per Year)

Type of Responses	Number of Respondents	Estimated Time per Response	Frequency of Responses	Total Yearly Burden Hours
Weekly	7	3 hours	52/year	1,092 hours
Semiannually	7	3 hours	2/year	42 hours
On occasion	2	3 hours	1/year	6 hours
Total				1,140 hours

13. Non-hourly Costs to Respondents

There are no non-hourly burdens for respondents. The data will be submitted electronically by email.

14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

We estimate a total annual cost to the Board of \$65,391.02. This amount is calculated using the weekly costs set forth in the table below and then annualizing them ($\$1,257.52 \times 52 = \$65,391.02$).

Position	Type of Work	Grade Level	Hourly Rate (with Benefits)	# of Hours	Weekly Cost
Transportation Industry Analyst	Review of Weekly Data Submission	GS 13-5	\$65.15	8	\$521.20
Section Chief	Supervisory Review of Weekly Data Submission	GS 14-5	\$76.99	4	\$307.96
Data Manager	Processing Weekly Data and Developing Output	GS 14-5	\$76.99	4	\$307.96
Web Content Developer	Posting Weekly Submissions to Board Website	ED	\$70.05	2.5	\$175.13
			Total		\$1,312.25

15. Changes in Burden Hours.

Change due to new collection.

16. Publication of Data and/or Results

The collected data will be posted on the Board's website.

17. Display of Expiration date for OMB approval

There is no form on which to display the expiration date, but the date will be published in the Federal Register once OMB approves the collection.

18. Exceptions to the Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

No exceptions are sought.

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

Not Applicable. None of the collections involve statistical methods.