

84 FR 48205-02, 2019 WL 4305215(F.R.)
NOTICES
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

60-Day Notice of Intent To Seek Extension of Approval: Class I Railroad Annual Report

Thursday, September 12, 2019

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

***48205** ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) gives notice of its intent to seek approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for an extension of the collection of Class I Railroad Annual Reports, described below.

***48206** DATES: Comments on this information collection should be submitted by November 12, 2019.

ADDRESSES: Direct all comments to Chris Oehrle, Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20423-0001, or to PRA@stb.gov. When submitting comments, please refer to "Paperwork Reduction Act Comments, Class I Railroad Annual Report." For further information regarding this collection, contact Pedro Ramirez at (202) 245-0333 or pedro.ramirez@stb.gov. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Comments are requested concerning: (1) The accuracy of the Board's burden estimates; (2) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; (3) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, when appropriate; and (4) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Board, including whether the collection has practical utility. Submitted comments will be summarized and included in the Board's request for OMB approval.

Description of Collection:

Title: Class I Railroad Annual Report.

OMB Control Number: 2140-0009.

Form Number: R-1.

Type of Review: Extension without change.

Respondents: Class I railroads.

Number of Respondents: Seven.

Estimated Time per Response: No more than 250 hours. This estimate includes time spent reviewing instructions; searching existing data sources; gathering and maintaining the data needed; completing and reviewing the collection of information; and converting the data from the carrier's individual accounting system to the Board's Uniform System of Accounts, which ensures that the information will be presented in a consistent format across all reporting railroads. In prior years, the estimate was higher, but many of these functions have become automated and more routine through the respondents' software programming. Thus, the time per response has been reduced, with additional technological efficiencies anticipated in the future.

Frequency of Response: Annual.

Total Annual Hour Burden: No more than 1,750 hours annually.

Total Annual "Non-Hour Burden" Cost: No "non-hour cost" burdens associated with this collection have been identified. The information is submitted electronically.

Needs and Uses: Annual reports are required to be filed by Class I railroads under 49 U.S.C. 11145. The reports show operating expenses and operating statistics of the carriers. Operating expenses include costs for right-of-way and structures, equipment, train and yard operations, and general and administrative expenses. Operating statistics include such items as car-miles, revenue-ton-miles, and gross ton-miles. These reports are used by the Board, other Federal agencies, and industry groups to monitor and assess railroad industry growth, financial stability, traffic, and operations, and to identify industry changes that may affect national transportation policy. Information from these reports is also entered into the Uniform Railroad Costing System (URCS), which is the Board's general purpose costing methodology. URCS, which was developed by the Board pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 11161, is used as a tool in rail rate proceedings (in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 10707(d)) to calculate the variable costs associated with providing a particular service. The Board also uses information from this collection to more effectively carry out other regulatory responsibilities, including: Acting on railroad requests for authority to engage in Board-regulated financial transactions such as mergers, acquisitions of control, and consolidations, see 49 U.S.C. 11323-24; analyzing the information that the Board obtains through the annual railroad industry waybill sample, see 49 CFR 1244; measuring off-branch costs in railroad abandonment proceedings, in accordance with 49 CFR 1152.32(n); developing the "rail cost adjustment factors," in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 10708; and conducting investigations and rulemakings.

Under the PRA, a federal agency that conducts or sponsors a collection of information must display a currently valid OMB control number. A collection of information, which is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c), includes agency requirements that persons submit reports, keep records, or provide information to the agency, third parties, or the public. Under 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A), federal agencies are required to provide, prior to an agency's submitting a collection to OMB for approval, a 60-day notice and comment period through publication in the Federal Register concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information.

Information from certain schedules contained in these reports is compiled and published on the Board's website, <http://www.stb.gov>. Information in these reports is not available from any other source.

Dated: September 9, 2019.

Jeffrey Herzig,

Clearance Clerk.

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