

**1111FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION**  
**Railroad Noise Emission Compliance Regulations**  
**(Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 210)**  
**SUPPORTING JUSTIFICATION**  
**OMB Control No. 2130-0527**

Summary of Submission

- This submission is a request for an extension without change of a currently approved collection of the last three-year approval granted by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on August 9, 2022, which expires August 31, 2025.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (hereafter “FRA” or the “Agency”) published a required 60-day Notice in the Federal Register on April 29, 2025. 90 FR 17877. FRA received no comments in response to this Notice.
- Overall, the estimated burden hours for which FRA requests approval remains at 2 hours, and the number of responses remains at 4.
- The answer to question number 12 itemizes all information collection requirements.
- The answer to question number 15 itemizes all adjustments.

**1. Circumstances that make collection of the information necessary.**

Under authority granted by the Noise Control Act of 1972 (86 Stat. 1234, Pub. L. 92-574), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established limits for noise emissions related to rail carriers in 40 CFR part 201. Those limits are enforced by FRA under 49 CFR part 210.<sup>1</sup> Part 210 requires railroads to certify that locomotives built after December 31, 1979, comply with locomotive noise emission standards.

FRA continually reviews and revises its regulations to ensure the regulatory burden on the rail industry is not excessive, to clarify the application of existing requirements, to remove requirements no longer necessary, and to keep pace with emerging technology, changing operational realities, and safety concerns. For instance, in 2019, FRA published a final rule eliminating the requirement that certain locomotives display a badge or tag to demonstrate the railroad has certified the locomotives comply with noise emission standards.<sup>2</sup> By removing the badge or tag requirement, it reduced economic burdens on the rail industry.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 42 FR 42343 (Aug. 23, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> 84 FR 15142 (April 15, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Id.

**2. How, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

The information collection under § 210.27 is necessary to ensure compliance with EPA noise standards for new locomotives. Although railroads no longer need to display a certification badge or tag in the locomotive cab, as was previously required by now-removed § 210.27(d), the locomotives still need to be tested and certified to comply with the noise emission standards, as required under § 210.27(a)-(c).

The information collected under § 210.27 is used by FRA, locomotive manufacturers, and railroads to confirm that new locomotives are tested and meet certain minimum noise standards in order to reduce the impact of rail operations on communities nationwide, as well as on any other properties receiving locomotives and rail cars.

If this information were not required, there would be no readily apparent assurance that the noise emissions from new locomotives were within the prescribed decibel criteria.

**3. Extent of automated information collection.**

FRA strongly encourages the use of information technology, wherever feasible, to reduce burden on respondents.

The amount and type of information required by this collection does not require elaborate information processing. For the convenience of railroads and other agency respondents, FRA has provided all of its safety forms on the agency website so that users can easily download them. For instance, railroads can easily access Form FRA F 6180.49A to record necessary noise emission data. Additionally, new technology has already been developed to reduce noise emissions of new locomotives by the use of exhaust silencers.

**4. Efforts to identify duplication.**

This information is not duplicated anywhere. FRA is the sole Federal agency requiring noise emission certification for new locomotives.

Similar data are not available for any other source.

**5. Efforts to minimize the burden on small businesses.**

FRA estimates there are 704 Class III railroads, who are subject to FRA's Noise Compliance Regulations. However, FRA expects this information collection to primarily affect locomotive manufacturers, since locomotives are currently tested by model rather than individually. Therefore, any impact on small railroads will likely be small.

**6. Impact of less frequent collection of information.**

If this information is not collected or is collected less frequently, communities around the nation might suffer from excessive locomotive and rail car noise and the deleterious effects on health and quality of life that such noise brings. Specifically, without this collection of information, certain minimum noise levels for new locomotives may not be met. Excessively loud noise, especially from locomotives, can reduce the desirability and livability in communities exposed to constant train traffic. Most severely affected are those homes closest to railroad tracks. Thus, requiring new locomotives to be certified as meeting certain minimum standards can aid in reducing harmful noise levels.

Additionally, this information collection provides a necessary and important monitoring tool for FRA.

**7. Special circumstances.**

No special circumstances exist with respect to these information collection requirements.

**8. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.8.**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) and 5 CFR part 1320, FRA published a notice in the Federal Register on April 29, 2025,<sup>4</sup> soliciting comment on these information collection requirements from the public, railroads, and other interested parties. FRA received no comments in response to this notice.

*Consultations with representatives of the affected population:*

As a part of FRA's oversight and enforcement of the Noise Emission Compliance Regulations, individuals from the railroad industry are generally in direct contact with the FRA inspectors at the time of the site inspection and can provide any comments or concerns to them.

**9. Payments or gifts to respondents.**

There are no monetary payments or gifts made to respondents associated with the information collection requirements contained in this regulation.

**10. Assurance of confidentiality.**

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

**11. Justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.**

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<sup>4</sup>90 FR 17877

This information collection does not contain any questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

**12. Estimate of burden hours for information collected.**

The estimates for the respondent universe, annual responses, and average time per responses are based on the experience and expertise of FRA's Office of Railroad Infrastructure and Mechanical Equipment.

CFR Part 210 Section	Respondent Universe	Total Annual Responses (A)	Average Time per Response (B)	Total Annual Burden Hours (A*B=C)	Total Cost Equivalent U.S.D (D=C*wage rate) <sup>5</sup>	PRA Analyses and Estimates
210.11—Waivers	FRA anticipates zero waivers over the three-year collection period.					
210.27(a)-(c)—New locomotive certification—Request for certification  Manufacturing companies that make locomotives for the US.	locomotive manufacturers	4	30 minutes	2	\$178.26	A railroad shall not operate a locomotive built after December 31, 1979, unless the locomotive has been certified to be in compliance with the Standards.  Certification must be made available for inspection by FRA if requested.
210.31—Operation standards (stationary locomotives at 30 meters)—Recorded locomotive noise emission test under the "Remarks" section on the reverse side of Form FRA F 6180.49A	The estimated paperwork burden for recording locomotive noise emission tests is covered under OMB control number 2130-0004 (see § 229.23).					
Total	4 locomotive manufacturers	4 responses		2 hours		

<sup>5</sup>The dollar equivalent cost is derived from the 2023 Surface Transportation Board Full Year Wage A&B data series using employee group 200 (Professional Administrative Staff) hourly wage rate of \$50.93. The total burden wage rate (straight time plus 75%) used in the table is \$89.13 (\$50.93 x 1.75 = \$89.13).

**15. Explanation of program changes and adjustments.**

This submission is an extension without change to a current collection of information (ICR). FRA made no adjustments to the previously approved burden hours. The requesting estimated burden hours remains at 2 hours, and the number of responses remains at 4.

**16. Publication of results of data collection.**

FRA does not plan to publish the information collected.

**17. Approval for not displaying the expiration date for OMB approval.**

FRA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date.

**18. Exception to certification statement.**

No exceptions are taken at this time.