

Daniel A. Clune, Director for the Middle East and Mediterranean (202) 395-4620.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to authority granted under Section 9 of the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2112 note), the President proclaimed certain tariff treatment for the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and qualifying industrial zones (Proclamation 6955 of November 13, 1996 (61 FR 58761)). In particular, the President proclaimed modifications to general notes 3 and 8 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States: (a) To provide duty-free treatment to qualifying articles that are the product of the West Bank or Gaza Strip or a qualifying industrial zone and are entered in accordance with the provisions of section 9 of the FTA Act; (b) to provide that articles of Israel may be treated as though they were articles directly shipped from Israel for the purposes of the United States-Israel Free Trade Area Agreement (the "Agreement") even if shipped to the United States from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, or a qualifying industrial zone, if the articles otherwise meet the requirements of the Agreement; and (c) to provide that the cost or value of materials produced in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, or a qualifying industrial zone may be included in the cost or value of materials produced in Israel under section 1(c)(i) of Annex 3 of the Agreement, and that the direct costs of processing operations performed in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, or a qualifying industrial zone may be included in the direct costs of processing operations performed in Israel under section 1(c)(ii) of Annex 3 of the Agreement.

Section 9(e) of the FTA Act defines a "qualifying industrial zone" as an area that "(1) Encompasses portions of the territory of Israel and Jordan or Israel and Egypt; (2) has been designated by local authorities as an enclave where merchandise may enter without payment of duty or excise taxes; and (3) has been specified by the President as a qualifying industrial zone." In Proclamation 6955, the President delegated to the United States Trade Representative the authority to designate qualifying industrial zones.

In an agreement dated November 16, 1997, the Government of Israel and the Government of Jordan agreed to the creation of the Irbid Qualifying Industrial Zone, encompassing areas under the customs control of the respective Governments. The Government of Israel and the Government of Jordan further agreed

that merchandise may enter the Irbid Qualifying Industrial Zone without payment of duty or excise taxes, and both Governments subsequently implemented this agreement pursuant to their domestic legal procedures. The Irbid Qualifying Industrial Zone accordingly meets the criteria under paragraphs 9(e) (1) and (2) of the FTA Act.

Pursuant to the authority delegated by the President in Proclamation 6955, the United States Trade Representative hereby designates the Irbid Qualifying Industrial Zone as a qualifying industrial zone under section 9 of the FTA Act, effective upon the date of publication of this notice.

Dated: March 6, 1998.

Charlene Barshefsky,

United States Trade Representative.

[FR Doc. 98-6413 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3190-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Transit Administration

National ITS Architecture Consistency Meetings

AGENCIES: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Supplemental notice.

SUMMARY: This is a supplemental notice to 63 FR 5,603 published on February 3, 1998, announcing a series of regional meetings at which DOT will discuss national ITS architecture consistency as it relates to federally funded highway and transit improvements that incorporate Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). It is anticipated that the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization bill will require federally funded projects which contain ITS elements to be consistent with the National ITS Architecture and approved standards. In anticipation, DOT is holding a series of outreach meetings to engage a broad range of stakeholders in discussions regarding consistency requirements. These meetings will be of interest to those involved in the planning, design and implementation of technology applications in transportation. Locations and dates for the regional meetings are as follows:
 Boston—February 25–26
 Los Angeles—March 18–19
 Houston—March 25–26
 Kansas City—April 1–2
 Washington DC Area—April 6–7
 Atlanta—April 9–10

Denver—April 14–15
 Portland—April 29–30
 Chicago—May 13–14
 New York—May 19–20.

Specific locations for the Washington DC Area, Atlanta, Denver, Portland, Chicago and New York meetings will be published at a later date.

DATES AND TIMES: The Los Angeles meeting will be held March 18–19, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on March 18th and from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on March 19th. The Houston area meeting will be held March 25–26, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on March 25th and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on March 26th. The Kansas City meeting will be held April 1–2, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on April 1st and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on April 2nd.

ADDRESSES: The Los Angeles meeting will be held at the Anaheim Marriott, 700 West Convention Way, Anaheim, CA 92802. The Houston meeting will be held at the Double Tree Hotel, 2001 Post Oak Boulevard, Houston, TX 77056. The Kansas City meeting will be held at The Westin Crown Center, One Pershing Road, Kansas City, MO 64108.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National ITS Architecture is a master blueprint for building an integrated, multimodal, intelligent transportation system. It provides a common framework that define key elements required for ITS functions. As such, it is an invaluable resource for planners, builders, designers, and operators of highway and transit systems to use in extending and integrating their systems operations.

A general introduction to ITS will be provided, but presentations will assume a basic awareness of technology applications in transportation. The meetings will include a brief introduction to the National ITS Architecture and associated standards, current thinking by DOT on possible approaches to consistency, and breakout sessions for discussion among attendees on consistency-related issues.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Registrations; Carol-Ann Courtney, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center at (617) 494-2686, fax (617) 494-2569; Additional Inquires: Shelley Lynch, Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (202) 366-8028; Mac Lister, Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (202) 366-9292; Ronald Boenau, Federal Transit Administration, (202) 366-0195; Robert Rupert, Federal Highway Administration, (202) 366-2194. All are located at the United States Department of Transportation,

400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Information and updates posted at the World Wide Web site at <http://www.its.dot.gov>

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 315; 49 CFR 1.48
Issued on: March 9, 1998.

Dennis C. Judycki,

Associate Administrator for Safety and System Applications, Federal Highway Administration.

Edward L. Thomas,

Associate Administrator for Research, Demonstration and Innovation Federal Transit Administration.

[FR Doc. 98-6521 Filed 3-12-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33556]

Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation, and Grand Trunk Western Railroad Incorporated—Control—Illinois Central Corporation, Illinois Central Railroad Company, Chicago, Central and Pacific Railroad Company, and Cedar River Railroad Company

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Decision No. 2; Notice of pre-filing notification.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to 49 CFR 1180.4(b), Canadian National Railway Company (CNR), Grand Trunk Corporation (GTC), and Grand Trunk Western Railroad Incorporated (GTW),¹ Illinois Central Corporation (IC Corp.), Illinois Central Railroad Company (ICR), Chicago, Central and Pacific Railroad Company (CCP), and Cedar River Railroad Company (CRRC)² have notified the Surface Transportation Board (Board) of their intent to file an application seeking authority under 49 U.S.C. 11323-25 for the acquisition of control, by CNR, through its indirect wholly owned subsidiary Blackhawk Merger Sub, Inc. (Merger Sub), of IC Corp., and through it of ICR and its railroad affiliates, and for the resulting common control by CNR of GTW and its railroad affiliates and ICR and its railroad affiliates.

The Board finds this to be a major transaction as defined in 49 CFR part 1180.

¹ CNR, GTC, and GTW, and their affiliates, are referred to collectively as CN.

² IC Corp., ICR, CCP, and CRRC, and their affiliates, are referred to collectively as IC. CN and IC are referred to collectively as Applicants.

ADDRESSES: An original and 25 copies of all documents must refer to STB Finance Docket No. 33556 and must be sent to the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, ATTN: STB Finance Docket No. 33556, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, one copy of all documents in this proceeding must be sent to Administrative Law Judge David Harfeld, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office of Administrative Law Judges, 888 First Street, N.E., Suite 11F, Washington, DC 20426 [(202) 219-2514; FAX: (202) 219-3289] and to each of Applicants' representatives: (1) Paul A. Cunningham, Esq., Harkins Cunningham, 1300 19th Street, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036-1609; and (2) William C. Sippel, Esq., Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly, Two Prudential Plaza, 45th Floor, 180 North Stetson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601-6710.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julia M. Farr, (202) 565-1613. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565-1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In the notice of intent (CN/IC-1) filed February 12, 1998, Applicants state that, on February 10, 1998, CNR, Merger Sub, and IC Corp. entered into an Agreement and Plan of Merger under which Merger Sub will acquire up to 75% of the common stock of IC Corp. in a cash tender offer, which was to begin on or about February 13, 1998. That stock, and any other IC Corp. stock acquired by CN, will be placed in a voting trust pending review of the merger by the Board. Applicants further state that, after consummation of the tender offer and requisite approval by the shareholders of IC Corp., Merger Sub will merge with and into IC Corp., with IC Corp. as the surviving corporation. As a result of that merger, all independent shareholders of IC Corp. will receive either CNR stock or a combination of CNR stock and cash in exchange for their stock in IC Corp. Upon consummation of the merger, the stock of Merger Sub held by CNR will become the sole issued and outstanding stock of IC Corp., and CNR will place that stock in the independent voting trust pending review and approval of the control transaction by the Board. If and when the Board takes final and favorable action, the voting trust will be dissolved, and CNR will assume control of IC Corp. and, through it, of CCP, CRRC, and their railroad affiliates.

Applicants state that they will use the year 1996 as the base year for purposes of their impact analysis to be filed in the application, and that they anticipate

filing their application on or before June 12, 1998.

The Board finds that this is a major transaction, as defined at 49 CFR 1180.2(a), as it is a control transaction involving two or more Class I railroads. CNR, through its wholly owned subsidiary GTC, presently controls GTW, a Class I railroad, and, under the proposed transaction, CNR proposes to acquire common control of ICR, also a Class I railroad. The application must conform to the regulations set forth at 49 CFR part 1180 and must contain all information required therein for major transactions, except as modified by any advance waiver.³ The carriers are also required to submit maps with overlays that show their existing routes and those of their competitors.

Electronic Submissions

In addition to submitting an original and 25 copies of all paper documents filed with the Board, the parties shall also submit, on diskettes or compact discs, copies of all textual materials, electronic workpapers, data bases and spreadsheets used to develop quantitative evidence. Data must be submitted on 3.5 inch IBM-compatible floppy diskettes or compact discs. Textual materials must be in, or convertible by and into, WordPerfect 7.0. Electronic spreadsheets must be in, or convertible by and into, Lotus 1-2-3 97 Edition, Excel Version 7.0, or Quattro Pro Version 7.0.

The data contained on the diskettes or compact discs submitted to the Board may be submitted under seal (to the extent that the corresponding paper copies are submitted under seal), and will be for the exclusive use of Board employees reviewing substantive and/or procedural matters in this proceeding. The flexibility provided by such computer data is necessary for efficient review of these materials by the Board and its staff.

The electronic submission requirements set forth in this decision supersede, for the purposes of this proceeding, the otherwise applicable electronic submission requirements set forth in our regulations. See 49 CFR 1104.3(a), as amended in *Expedited Procedures for Processing Rail Rate Reasonableness, Exemption and Revocation Proceedings*, STB Ex Parte No. 527, 61 FR 52710, 52711 (Oct. 8,

³ The ICC Termination Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104-88, 109 Stat. 803, requires that we consider the effect of the proposed transaction "on competition among rail carriers in the affected region or in the national rail system." 49 U.S.C. 11324(b)(5). Applicants are reminded to include analysis on both elements of this criterion in their competitive analyses.