Maryland Rail Commuter—110 coaches
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority—358 coaches
North Carolina Department of Transportation—14 coaches
Virginia Railway Express—59 coaches

Please note that some of the commuter agencies' coaches are cab control cars. 49 CFR 229.14 requires that components added to the passenger car that enable it to serve as a lead locomotive, control the locomotive actually providing tractive power, and otherwise control the movement of the train, are subject to the requirements of 49 CFR part 229. Therefore, only the brake system components not subject to the requirements of 49 CFR 229.14 are to be considered in this petition for any cab control car.

Amtrak declares that the commuter rail equipment is maintained in accordance to all applicable FRA requirements, Association of American Railroad's maintenance practices, and Amtrak's standard maintenance procedures. Amtrak also contends that the service conditions on the commuter car fleets are considered to be consistent with those conditions under which Amtrak's four year test for COT&S was conducted.

Norfolk Southern Corporation (Waiver Petition Docket Number RST–96–3)

The Norfolk Southern Corporation (NS) seeks a waiver from the requirements of 49 CFR Part 213.241 to allow it to submit and maintain track inspection records via an electronic system.

In its petition, NS refers to the provisions of § 213.241 which require that each record of an inspection be prepared on the day the inspection is made and signed by the person making the inspection. NS believes that these provisions do not specifically mandate a paper-based recordkeeping system, and states that to the extent that this part implies such a requirement, it be granted a waiver to substitute electronic records for paper ones. NS further requests that it be permitted to input the records of inspection within one day's time of the date on which the inspection is made.

NS states that the use of the electronic system would allow the railroad to significantly reduce the volume of paper reports (estimated to average approximately 600 reports each week) and the associated handling costs. NS also states that the electronic reporting system could be effected without cost to any party and without disrupting or destroying the integrity of the present record system.

Under the proposed reporting procedure, track inspectors would continue to make their inspections and gather information on handwritten notes or, potentially, laptop computers. The proposed filing system would merely alter the way in which the inspection report is submitted, stored, and retrieved. Each track inspector would have his/her own personal electronic identity. The track inspector would call up a form on NS's e-mail network, insert the pertinent information on the form, and send it electronically to the regional offices. Upon receipt via e-mail in the regional offices, hard copy reports would be placed into files along the same lines as are currently used. In the future, NS states that it will develop a separate database to store all track inspection reports.

NS declares that its policy prohibits the sharing and duplication of passwords, thus preserving the uniqueness of each user's identity. Once the inspection report is completed by the inspector, the computer system would not accept subsequent alterations or modifications of the report. The computer system would allow subsequent access to such reports, or compilations of information generated therefrom, but would limit this access to a read-only basis.

NS anticipates that, in virtually all instances, the record of inspection will be prepared and entered into the electronic system on the inspection date. However, NS states that it is possible for the input process to be delayed in rare instances, such as when the system mainframe computer is taken off-line for periodic software maintenance, when the reporting inspector is called out to respond to an emergency situation, or when the inspector is located at a site where he/she does not have access to a terminal. NS asks that it be granted the one-day grace period for these rare circumstances.

NS believes that the granting of the petition would provide positive benefits for all parties involved and an immediate increase in efficiency while reducing costs.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested party desires an opportunity for oral comment, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number (e.g., Waiver Petition Docket Number PB–94–3) and must be submitted in triplicate to the Docket Clerk, Office of Chief Counsel, FRA, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Mail Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590. Communications received within 30 days of the date of this notice will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable. All written communications concerning these proceedings are available for examination during regular business hours (9 a.m.–5 p.m.) at FRA's temporary docket room located at 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Room 7051, Washington, DC 20005.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on July 29, 1997.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 97–20514 Filed 8–4–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Application for Approval of Discontinuance or Modification of a Railroad Signal System or Relief From the Requirements of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 236

Pursuant to Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 235 and 49 U.S.C. App. 26, the following railroads have petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval for the discontinuance or modification of the signal system or relief from the requirements of 49 CFR part 236 as detailed below.

Block Signal Application (BS–AP)–No. 3432

Applicant: CSX Transportation, Incorporated, Mr. R. M. Kadlick, Chief Engineer Train Control, 500 Water Street (S/C J–350), Jacksonville, Florida 32202.

CSX Transportation, Incorporated seeks approval of the proposed modification of the traffic control system, on the single main track, at Haines City, Florida, milepost A–828.38, Sanford Subdivision, Jacksonville Service Lane, consisting of the discontinuance and removal of controlled signals 106RA and 106LA.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to eliminate facilities no longer needed in present day operation,

due to the previous removal of the siding.

BS–AP–No. 3433

Applicant: Soo Line Railroad Company, Mr. M. S. Hanson, District Manager Engineering Services, Canadian Pacific Railway, 105 South 5th Street, Box 530, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440.

The Soo Line Railroad Company seeks approval of the proposed discontinuance and removal of the automatic block signal system, on the single main track, between Preston Interlocking and Belt Junction Interlocking, and Belt Junction Interlocking and Spring Hill Interlocking, near Terre Haute, Indiana, on the Latta Subdivision, including installation of fixed approach signals.

The reason given for the proposed changes is to eliminate facilities no longer required for present day operation, as the only freight service on the line is one local, six days a week.

BS–AP–No. 3434

Applicants: South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad and Kansas Eastern Railroad, Mr. David L. Buccolo, Vice President Rules and Safety, 315 West Third, Pittsburg, Kansas 66762.

The South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad (SKOL) and the Kansas Eastern Railroad (KE) jointly seek approval of the proposed discontinuance and removal of automatic interlocking signals 1553 and 1554, at Cherryvale, Kansas, where a single main track of the SKOL, Tulsa Subdivision, milepost 155.6, crosses at grade, a single main track of the KE, Neodesha Subdivision, milepost 386.8. The proposal includes removal of the automatic gate mechanism, retaining a manual gate to be left lined for the last train movement.

The reasons given for the proposed changes are that the equipment is antiquated and replacement parts are almost impossible to obtain, it will reduce unnecessary maintenance expense, train operations in the area have changed and SKOL and KE are now joint operating lines, and also help avoid delays and unnecessary blockages of the highway road crossings in the area.

Any interested party desiring to protest the granting of an application shall set forth specifically the grounds upon which the protest is made, and contain a concise statement of the interest of the protestant in the proceeding. The original and two copies of the protest shall be filed with the Associate Administrator for Safety, FRA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Mail Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590 within 45 calendar days of the date of issuance of this notice. Additionally, one copy of the protest shall be furnished to the applicant at the address listed above.

FRA expects to be able to determine these matters without an oral hearing. However, if a specific request for an oral hearing is accompanied by a showing that the party is unable to adequately present his or her position by written statements, an application may be set for public hearing.

Issued in Washington, DC on July 29, 1997.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 97–20515 Filed 8–4–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. 97–049; Notice 1]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1988–1989 Audi 80 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) They are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is September 4, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Section, Room 5109, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202–366–5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) (formerly section 108(c)(3)(A)(i)(I) of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the Act)), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115 (formerly section 114 of the Act), and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the **Federal Register** of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the **Federal Register**.

Champagne Imports, Inc. of Lansdale, Pennsylvania (''Champagne'') (Registered Importer 90–009) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which Champagne believes are substantially similar are 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars to their U.S. certified counterpart, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Champagne submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 1988–1989 Audi 80 passenger cars, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are