uity capital, and cover the effects of inflation; and

(B) attract and retain capital in amounts adequate to provide a sound transportation system in the United States.

(3) On the basis of the standards and procedures described in paragraph (2), the Board shall annually determine which rail carriers are earning adequate revenues.

(b) The Board may begin a proceeding under this section only on complaint. A complaint under subsection (a) of this section must be made under section 11701 of this title, but the proceeding may also be in extension of a complaint pending before the Board.

(c) In a proceeding to challenge the reasonableness of a rate, the Board shall make its determination as to the reasonableness of the challenged rate—

(1) within 9 months after the close of the administrative record if the determination is based upon a stand-alone cost presentation; or

(2) within 6 months after the close of the administrative record if the determination is based upon the methodology adopted by the Board pursuant to section 10701(d)(3).

(d) Within 9 months after January 1, 1996, the Board shall establish procedures to ensure expeditious handling of challenges to the reasonableness of railroad rates. The procedures shall include appropriate measures for avoiding delay in the discovery and evidentiary phases of such proceedings and exemption or revocation proceedings, including appropriate sanctions for such delay, and for ensuring prompt disposition of motions and interlocutory administrative appeals.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, § 102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 810; amended Pub. L. 104–287, § 5(23), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3390.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 10704, Pub. L. 95–473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1373; Pub. L. 96–296, § 13(b), July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 803; Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 205(b), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1906; Pub. L. 97–261, § 9(b), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1109; Pub. L. 99–521, § 7(b), Oct. 22, 1986, 100 Stat. 2994, related to authority and criteria for rates, classifications, rules, and practices prescribed by Interstate Commerce Commission, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a). See sections 10704, 13701, and 15503 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 104–287 substituted ''January 1, 1996'' for ''the effective date of the ICC Termination Act of 1995''.

§ 10705. Authority: through routes, joint classifications, rates, and divisions prescribed by Board

(a)(1) The Board may, and shall when it considers it desirable in the public interest, prescribe through routes, joint classifications, joint rates, the division of joint rates, and the conditions under which those routes must be operated, for a rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part.

(2) The Board may require a rail carrier to include in a through route substantially less than the entire length of its railroad and any intermediate railroad operated with it under common management or control if that intermediate railroad lies between the terminals of the through route only when—

(A) required under section 10741, 10742, or 11102 of this title;

(B) inclusion of those lines would make the through route unreasonably long when compared with a practicable alternative through route that could be established; or

(C) the Board decides that the proposed through route is needed to provide adequate, and more efficient or economic, transportation.

The Board shall give reasonable preference, subject to this subsection, to the rail carrier originating the traffic when prescribing through routes.

(b) The Board shall prescribe the division of joint rates to be received by a rail carrier providing transportation subject to its jurisdiction under this part when it decides that a division of joint rates established by the participating carriers under section 10703 of this title, or under a decision of the Board under subsection (a) of this section, does or will violate section 10701 of this title.

(c) If a division of a joint rate prescribed under a decision of the Board is later found to violate section 10701 of this title, the Board may decide what division would have been reasonable and order adjustment to be made retroactive to the date the complaint was filed, the date the order for an investigation was made, or a later date that the Board decides is justified. The Board may make a decision under this subsection effective as part of its original decision.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, § 102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 811.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Prior sections 10705 and 10705a were omitted in the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a).

Section 10705, Pub. L. 95–473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1375; Pub. L. 96–296, § 22(b)–(g), July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 813; Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 218, Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1925; Pub. L. 97–449, § 5(g)(4), Jan. 12, 1983, 96 Stat. 2443, related to authority for through routes, joint classifications, rates, and divisions prescribed by Interstate Commerce Commission. See sections 10705 and 13701 of this title.

Section 10705a, added Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 217(a)(1), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1916; amended Pub. L. 103–272, § 4(j)(20), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1369, related to joint rate surcharges and cancellations.

§ 10706. Rate agreements: exemption from antitrust laws

(a)(1) In this subsection—

(A) the term ''affiliate'' means a person controlling, controlled by, or under common control or ownership with another person and ''ownership'' refers to equity holdings in a business entity of at least 5 percent;

(B) the term ''single-line rate'' refers to a rate or allowance proposed by a single rail carrier that is applicable only over its line and for which the transportation (exclusive of terminal services by switching, drayage or other

terminal carriers or agencies) can be provided by that carrier; and

(C) the term ''practicably participates in the movement'' shall have such meaning as the Board shall by regulation prescribe.

(2)(A) A rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part that is a party to an agreement of at least 2 rail carriers that relates to rates (including charges between rail carriers and compensation paid or received for the use of facilities and equipment), classifications, divisions, or rules related to them, or procedures for joint consideration, initiation, publication, or establishment of them, shall apply to the Board for approval of that agreement under this subsection. The Board shall approve the agreement only when it finds that the making and carrying out of the agreement will further the transportation policy of section 10101 of this title and may require compliance with conditions necessary to make the agreement further that policy as a condition of its approval. If the Board approves the agreement, it may be made and carried out under its terms and under the conditions required by the Board, and the Sherman Act (15 U.S.C. 1, et seq.), the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12, et seq.), the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41, et seq.), sections 73 and 74 of the Wilson Tariff Act (15 U.S.C. 8 and 9), and the Act of June 19, 1936 (15 U.S.C. 13, 13a, 13b, 21a) do not apply to parties and other persons with respect to making or carrying out the agreement. However, the Board may not approve or continue approval of an agreement when the conditions required by it are not met or if it does not receive a verified statement under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph.

(B) The Board may approve an agreement under subparagraph (A) of this paragraph only when the rail carriers applying for approval file a verified statement with the Board. Each statement must specify for each rail carrier that is a party to the agreement—

(i) the name of the carrier;

(ii) the mailing address and telephone number of its headquarter's office; and

(iii) the names of each of its affiliates and the names, addresses, and affiliates of each of its officers and directors and of each person, together with an affiliate, owning or controlling any debt, equity, or security interest in it having a value of at least $1,000,000.

(3)(A) An organization established or continued under an agreement approved under this subsection shall make a final disposition of a rule or rate docketed with it by the 120th day after the proposal is docketed. Such an organization may not—

(i) permit a rail carrier to discuss, to participate in agreements related to, or to vote on single-line rates proposed by another rail carrier, except that for purposes of general rate increases and broad changes in rates, classifications, rules, and practices only, if the Board finds at any time that the implementation of this clause is not feasible, it may delay or suspend such implementation in whole or in part;

(ii) permit a rail carrier to discuss, to participate in agreements related to, or to vote on rates related to a particular interline movement unless that rail carrier practicably participates in the movement; or

(iii) if there are interline movements over two or more routes between the same end points, permit a carrier to discuss, to participate in agreements related to, or to vote on rates except with a carrier which forms part of a particular single route. If the Board finds at any time that the implementation of this clause is not feasible, it may delay or suspend such implementation in whole or in part.

(B)(i) In any proceeding in which a party alleges that a rail carrier voted or agreed on a rate or allowance in violation of this subsection, that party has the burden of showing that the vote or agreement occurred. A showing of parallel behavior does not satisfy that burden by itself.

(ii) In any proceeding in which it is alleged that a carrier was a party to an agreement, conspiracy, or combination in violation of a Federal law cited in subsection (a)(2)(A) of this section or of any similar State law, proof of an agreement, conspiracy, or combination may not be inferred from evidence that two or more rail carriers acted together with respect to an interline rate or related matter and that a party to such action took similar action with respect to a rate or related matter on another route or traffic. In any proceeding in which such a violation is alleged, evidence of a discussion or agreement between or among such rail carrier and one or more other rail carriers, or of any rate or other action resulting from such discussion or agreement, shall not be admissible if the discussion or agreement—

(I) was in accordance with an agreement approved under paragraph (2) of this subsection; or

(II) concerned an interline movement of the rail carrier, and the discussion or agreement would not, considered by itself, violate the laws referred to in the first sentence of this clause.

In any proceeding before a jury, the court shall determine whether the requirements of subclause (I) or (II) are satisfied before allowing the introduction of any such evidence.

(C) An organization described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall provide that transcripts or sound recordings be made of all meetings, that records of votes be made, and that such transcripts or recordings and voting records be submitted to the Board and made available to other Federal agencies in connection with their statutory responsibilities over rate bureaus, except that such material shall be kept confidential and shall not be subject to disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

(4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, one or more rail carriers may enter into an agreement, without obtaining prior Board approval, that provides solely for compilation, publication, and other distribution of rates in effect or to become effective. The Sherman Act (15 U.S.C. 1 et seq.), the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. 12 et seq.), the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.), sections 73

and 74 of the Wilson Tariff Act (15 U.S.C. 8 and 9), and the Act of June 19, 1936 (15 U.S.C. 13, 13a, 13b, 21a) shall not apply to parties and other persons with respect to making or carrying out such agreement. However, the Board may, upon application or on its own initiative, investigate whether the parties to such an agreement have exceeded its scope, and upon a finding that they have, the Board may issue such orders as are necessary, including an order dissolving the agreement, to ensure that actions taken pursuant to the agreement are limited as provided in this paragraph.

(5)(A) Whenever two or more shippers enter into an agreement to discuss among themselves that relates to the amount of compensation such shippers propose to be paid by rail carriers providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part, for use by such rail carriers of rolling stock owned or leased by such shippers, the shippers shall apply to the Board for approval of that agreement under this paragraph. The Board shall approve the agreement only when it finds that the making and carrying out of the agreement will further the transportation policy set forth in section 10101 of this title and may require compliance with conditions necessary to make the agreement further that policy as a condition of approval. If the Board approves the agreement, it may be made and carried out under its terms and under the terms required by the Board, and the antitrust laws set forth in paragraph (2) of this subsection do not apply to parties and other persons with respect to making or carrying out the agreement. The Board shall approve or disapprove an agreement under this paragraph within one year after the date application for approval of such agreement is made.

(B) If the Board approves an agreement described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and the shippers entering into such agreement and the rail carriers proposing to use rolling stock owned or leased by such shippers, under payment by such carriers or under a published allowance, are unable to agree upon the amount of compensation to be paid for the use of such rolling stock, any party directly involved in the negotiations may require that the matter be settled by submitting the issues in dispute to the Board. The Board shall render a binding decision, based upon a standard of reasonableness and after taking into consideration any past precedents on the subject matter of the negotiations, no later than 90 days after the date of the submission of the dispute to the Board.

(C) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to change the law in effect prior to October 1, 1980, with respect to the obligation of rail carriers to utilize rolling stock owned or leased by shippers.

(b) The Board may require an organization established or continued under an agreement approved under this section to maintain records and submit reports. The Board may inspect a record maintained under this section.

(c) The Board may review an agreement approved under subsection (a) of this section and shall change the conditions of approval or terminate it when necessary to comply with the public interest and subsection (a). The Board shall postpone the effective date of a change of an agreement under this subsection for whatever period it determines to be reasonably necessary to avoid unreasonable hardship.

(d) The Board may begin a proceeding under this section on its own initiative or on application. Action of the Board under this section—

(1) approving an agreement;

(2) denying, ending, or changing approval;

(3) prescribing the conditions on which approval is granted; or

(4) changing those conditions,

has effect only as related to application of the antitrust laws referred to in subsection (a) of this section.

(e)(1) The Federal Trade Commission, in consultation with the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice, shall prepare periodically an assessment of, and shall report to the Board on—

(A) possible anticompetitive features of—

(i) agreements approved or submitted for approval under subsection (a) of this section; and

(ii) an organization operating under those agreements; and

(B) possible ways to alleviate or end an anticompetitive feature, effect, or aspect in a manner that will further the goals of this part and of the transportation policy of section 10101 of this title.

(2) Reports received by the Board under this subsection shall be published and made available to the public under section 552(a) of title 5.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, § 102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 812; amended Pub. L. 104–287, § 5(24), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3390.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Sherman Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A), (4), is act July 2, 1890, ch. 647, 26 Stat. 209, as amended, which is classified to sections 1 to 7 of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1 of Title 15 and Tables.

The Clayton Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A), (4), is act Oct. 15, 1914, ch. 323, 38 Stat. 730, as amended, which is classified generally to sections 12, 13, 14 to 19, 21, and 22 to 27 of Title 15 and sections 52 and 53 of Title 29, Labor. For further details and complete classification of this Act to the Code, see References in Text note set out under section 12 of Title 15 and Tables.

The Federal Trade Commission Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A), (4), is act Sept. 26, 1914, ch. 311, 38 Stat. 717, as amended, which is classified generally to subchapter I (§ 41 et seq.) of chapter 2 of Title 15. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 58 of Title 15 and Tables.

Sections 73 and 74 of the Wilson Tariff Act, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A), (4), are sections 73 and 74 of act Aug. 27, 1894, ch. 349, 28 Stat. 570, which enacted sections 8 and 9, respectively, of Title 15.

Act of June 19, 1936, referred to in subsec. (a)(2)(A), (4), is act June 19, 1936, ch. 592, 49 Stat. 1526, popularly known as the Robinson-Patman Anti-discrimination Act and also as the Robinson-Patman Price Discrimination Act, which enacted sections 13a, 13b, and 21a of Title 15 and amended section 13 of Title 15. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 13 of Title 15 and Tables.

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 10706, Pub. L. 95–473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1377; Pub. L. 96–258, § 1(7), June 3, 1980, 94 Stat. 426;

Pub. L. 96–296, § 14(a), (c), (d), July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 803, 808; Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 219(a)–(e), 224(b), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1926–1929; Pub. L. 97–261, § 10(a)–(d), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1109, 1110; Pub. L. 98–216, § 2(12), Feb. 14, 1984, 98 Stat. 5; Pub. L. 99–521, § 7(c), Oct. 22, 1986, 100 Stat. 2995, related to exemption from antitrust laws of rate agreements, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a). See sections 10706 and 13703 of this title.

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (a)(5)(C). Pub. L. 104–287 substituted ''October 1, 1980,'' for ''the effective date of the Staggers Rail Act of 1980''.

§ 10707. Determination of market dominance in rail rate proceedings

(a) In this section, ''market dominance'' means an absence of effective competition from other rail carriers or modes of transportation for the transportation to which a rate applies.

(b) When a rate for transportation by a rail carrier providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part is challenged as being unreasonably high, the Board shall determine whether the rail carrier proposing the rate has market dominance over the transportation to which the rate applies. The Board may make that determination on its own initiative or on complaint. A finding by the Board that the rail carrier does not have market dominance is determinative in a proceeding under this part related to that rate or transportation unless changed or set aside by the Board or set aside by a court of competent jurisdiction.

(c) When the Board finds in any proceeding that a rail carrier proposing or defending a rate for transportation has market dominance over the transportation to which the rate applies, it may then determine that rate to be unreasonable if it exceeds a reasonable maximum for that transportation. However, a finding of market dominance does not establish a presumption that the proposed rate exceeds a reasonable maximum.

(d)(1)(A) In making a determination under this section, the Board shall find that the rail carrier establishing the challenged rate does not have market dominance over the transportation to which the rate applies if such rail carrier proves that the rate charged results in a revenue-variable cost percentage for such transportation that is less than 180 percent.

(B) For purposes of this section, variable costs for a rail carrier shall be determined only by using such carrier's unadjusted costs, calculated using the Uniform Rail Costing System cost finding methodology (or an alternative methodology adopted by the Board in lieu thereof) and indexed quarterly to account for current wage and price levels in the region in which the carrier operates, with adjustments specified by the Board. A rail carrier may meet its burden of proof under this subsection by establishing its variable costs in accordance with this paragraph, but a shipper may rebut that showing by evidence of such type, and in accordance with such burden of proof, as the Board shall prescribe.

(2) A finding by the Board that a rate charged by a rail carrier results in a revenue-variable cost percentage for the transportation to which the rate applies that is equal to or greater than 180 percent does not establish a presumption that—

(A) such rail carrier has or does not have market dominance over such transportation; or

(B) the proposed rate exceeds or does not exceed a reasonable maximum.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, § 102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 815.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 10709 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a).

Prior sections 10707 and 10707a were omitted in the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a).

Section 10707, Pub. L. 95–473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1380; Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 207, Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1907; Pub. L. 103–272, § 4(j)(21), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1369, related to investigation and suspension of new rail carrier rates, classifications, rules, and practices.

Section 10707a, added Pub. L. 96–448, title II, § 203(a), Oct. 14, 1980, 94 Stat. 1901; amended Pub. L. 103–272, § 4(j)(22), July 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 1369, related to zone of rail carrier flexibility.

§ 10708. Rail cost adjustment factor

(a) The Board shall, as often as practicable, but in no event less often than quarterly, publish a rail cost adjustment factor which shall be a fraction, the numerator of which is the latest published Index of Railroad Costs (which index shall be compiled or verified by the Board, with appropriate adjustments to reflect the change in composition of railroad costs, including the quality and mix of material and labor) and the denominator of which is the same index for the fourth quarter of every fifth year, beginning with the fourth quarter of 1992.

(b) The rail cost adjustment factor published by the Board under subsection (a) of this section shall take into account changes in railroad productivity. The Board shall also publish a similar index that does not take into account changes in railroad productivity.

(Added Pub. L. 104–88, title I, § 102(a), Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 816.)

PRIOR PROVISIONS

Provisions similar to those in this section were contained in section 10712 of this title prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a).

A prior section 10708, Pub. L. 95–473, Oct. 17, 1978, 92 Stat. 1382; Pub. L. 96–296, § 11, July 1, 1980, 94 Stat. 801; Pub. L. 97–261, §§ 11, 12(a), Sept. 20, 1982, 96 Stat. 1112, 1113; Pub. L. 99–521, § 7(d), Oct. 22, 1986, 100 Stat. 2995, related to investigation and suspension of new nonrail carrier rates, classifications, rules, and practices, prior to the general amendment of this subtitle by Pub. L. 104–88, § 102(a).

§ 10709. Contracts

(a) One or more rail carriers providing transportation subject to the jurisdiction of the Board under this part may enter into a contract with one or more purchasers of rail services to provide specified services under specified rates and conditions.

(b) A party to a contract entered into under this section shall have no duty in connection