

F. Change to Reporting Requirements for Non-Rail For-Profit Providers of Public Transportation

FTA currently has 18 non-rail, for-profit providers of public transportation that report directly to the NTD. One of these reporters raised the concern that providing the detailed financial information required of full reporters to the NTD may compromise their ability to successfully compete for business. They requested that FTA consider reducing the financial reporting requirements for for-profit providers to mirror those of reduced reporters to address their concern. FTA is seeking comment on the proposal to allow non-rail, for-profit providers of public transportation the option to report to the NTD as a reduced reporter. Of the 18 non-rail, for-profit providers referenced above, ten already meet the current reduced reporting threshold. This proposal would provide the flexibility to report as a reduced reporter for the remaining 8 agencies.

As a reduced reporter, these agencies would no longer be required to report passenger miles traveled (PMT). Such data previously reported by these agencies would not be available for use in the Urbanized Area Formula (UAF) apportionment. If the local urbanized area has more than 200,000 in population, this may reduce their local urbanized area's UAF apportionment. If the local urbanized area has fewer than 200,000 in population, this may impact the local urbanized area's eligibility for Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) funds in the UAF apportionment.

FTA would amend current reporting forms to allow ferry providers to continue to report fixed guideway directional route miles (DRM) or fixed guideway vehicle revenue miles (VRM) for continued use in the State of Good Repair Formula Apportionment.

G. Clarification of Mechanical System Failures Definitions

FTA has received feedback from the transit industry that the current definitions of *major mechanical system failures* and *other mechanical system failures* do not provide sufficient detail or clarity to allow for a useful analysis of the data. This information is currently collected from each agency by mode. The current definitions can be found in the 2017 NTD Policy Manual or the glossary on the NTD Web site: www.transit.dot.gov/ntd. *Major mechanical system failures* and *other mechanical system failures* are only reported by full reporters to the NTD; reduced reporters and capital asset-only

reporters do not currently report these data.

To improve current reporting guidance, FTA proposes adding language specifically excluding failures caused by collision, natural disaster, or vandalism to the current definitions. FTA seeks comment on this proposed change. The amended definitions are below:

Proposed definition of *major mechanical system failure*:

A failure of some mechanical element of the revenue vehicle that is not caused by a collision, natural disaster, or vandalism and prevents the vehicle from completing a scheduled revenue trip or from starting the next scheduled revenue trip because actual movement is limited or the vehicle is unsafe.

Proposed definition of *other mechanical system failure*:

A failure of some other mechanical element of the revenue vehicle that is not caused by a collision, natural disaster, or vandalism, but, because of local agency policy, prevents the revenue vehicle from completing a scheduled revenue trip or from starting the next scheduled revenue trip even though the vehicle is physically able to continue in revenue service.

In addition to the proposed definition changes, FTA seeks additional feedback on the current utility of the *major mechanical system failures* and *other mechanical system failures* data points. As an example, one of the primary concerns expressed to FTA by stakeholders is that the current definition of *other mechanical system failures* cannot be used for comparative purposes because it is heavily dependent on local policy decisions. FTA would like to improve the utility of these data points to: (1) Inform transit stakeholders on mechanical performance; (2) allow for better comparative analysis of the data; and, (3) provide better insight on transit state of good repair. At this time, FTA is not formally proposing changes to these data points beyond the definition adjustments addressed above; however, two scenarios are outlined below. FTA welcomes input from stakeholders on these scenarios and welcomes additional direction on how these data points may be adjusted to best accomplish the stated goals.

Input received from this notice may be used to inform a future proposal to adjust the definition or collection method of these data points.

The scenarios described below are for public comment only. At this time, FTA is not formally proposing these changes.

FTA seeks feedback on the following scenarios:

(1) Collection of the *major mechanical system failures* by fleet rather than by mode. This would improve the granularity of the *major mechanical system failures* data by collecting the information at the vehicle fleet level. It would provide a more robust and granular data set for *major mechanical system failures* and allow stakeholders to look at mechanical failure data by vehicle type. However, improving the granularity of the data could also increase the reporting burden for some agencies. To help offset this increase, FTA asks stakeholders to consider discontinuing the collection of *other mechanical system failures*.

(2) Adjust the definition of *other mechanical system failure* to the following: All non-major failures of a mechanical element of the revenue vehicle requiring a work order that are not caused by a collision, natural disaster, or vandalism.

This adjustment would provide a more standard and comprehensive look at the *other mechanical system failures* data. The new definition would allow for better comparison across transit agencies by focusing the outcome of this data point on a system failure rather than a local policy decision to remove the vehicle from service.

In addition to the scenarios discussed above, FTA welcomes additional comment and input on how these data points may be adjusted to benefit the transit industry and transit stakeholders. FTA specifically requests that agencies provide comment on the anticipated impact on reporting burden for the scenarios above as well as the anticipated reporting burden for any additional suggestions provided to improve the utility of these data points.

K. Jane Williams,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2017-23380 Filed 10-26-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

[Docket No. FTA-2017-0014]

Notice of Proposed Buy America Waiver for Motor Brakes and Machinery Brakes for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed Buy America waiver and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) received a request

from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for a Buy America non-availability waiver for the procurement of motor brakes and machinery brakes (collectively, “the brake units”) for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, as part of the Wave Streetcar project because there are no domestic manufacturers of the brake units. FTA is providing notice of the non-availability waiver request and seeks public comment before deciding whether to grant FDOT’s request. The size of the disc and drum brakes required for this bridge are not domestically available, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) granted FDOT waivers for this equipment for another project. FTA is providing notice of the waiver request and seeks public comment before deciding whether to grant the request.

DATES: Comments must be received by November 13, 2017. Late-filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: Please identify your submission by Docket Number (FTA–2017–0008) through one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Submit electronic comments and other data to <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- *U.S. Mail:* Send comments to Docket Operations; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., West Building Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590–0001.
- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* Take comments to Docket Operations in Room W12–140 of the West Building, Ground Floor, at 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.
- *Fax:* Fax comments to Docket Operations, U.S. Department of Transportation, at (202) 493–2251.

Instructions: You must include the agency name (Federal Transit Administration) and Docket Number (FTA–2017–0014) for this notice, at the beginning of your comments. If sent by mail, submit two copies of your comments. Due to security procedures in effect since October 2001, mail received through the U.S. Postal Service may be subject to delays. Parties submitting comments should consider using an express mail firm to ensure their prompt filing of any submissions not filed electronically or by hand. If you wish to receive confirmation that FTA received your comments, you must include a self-addressed stamped postcard. All comments received will be posted without change to [http://](http://www.regulations.gov)

www.regulations.gov, including any personal information provided. You may review U.S. DOT’s complete Privacy Act Statement published in the **Federal Register** on April 11, 2000, at 65 FR 19477–8 or <http://DocketsInfo.dot.gov>.

Electronic Access and Filing: This document and all comments received may be viewed online through the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Electronic submission and retrieval help and guidelines are available on the Web site. It is available 24 hours each day, 365 days a year. Please follow the instructions. An electronic copy of this document may also be downloaded from the Office of the Federal Register’s home page at <https://www.federalregister.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Ames, Attorney Advisor, at (202) 366–2743 or Laura.Ames@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of this notice is to provide notice and seek comment on whether the FTA should grant a non-availability waiver for FDOT’s purchase of motor brakes and machinery brakes for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, as part of the Wave Streetcar project. The proposed Wave Streetcar project will serve downtown Fort Lauderdale, spanning the New River to connect the hospital and courthouse districts on the south side with the downtown business core and government, education, shopping, recreation and entertainment centers on the north side. The design of the 2.8-mile route was expanded in October 2015 to include a loop on the north end in Flagler Village to capture recent and future residential and retail development in that area. The construction of the Wave Streetcar is currently scheduled to begin in mid-2017.

Mechanical drive systems have inherent braking requirements. AASHTO Movable Highway Bridge Design Specifications (MHBDS) require disc or drum brakes. The intent of AASHTO MHBDS 5.5, 5.6, 6.7.13 and the FOOT Structures Design Guidelines (SDG) Section 8.6.7 is to provide two sets of brakes—motor brakes and machinery brakes. This requirement provides stopping and holding as well as a failsafe within the gear train of the operating machinery. FDOT’s research indicates that the size of the disc and drum brakes required for this bridge are not domestically available. All recent new construction and rehabilitation of various moveable bridges in Florida

have required Buy America waivers, including a Buy America waiver granted by FHWA on May 2, 2016 for the same items. 81 FR 26305 (May 2, 2016).

Specific requirements for the brakes are as follows: All brakes shall be spring actuated, thruster released, stainless steel, drum type brakes with adjustable torque setting and set time delay settings. Span drive brakes shall be sized per Movable Highway Bridge Design Specifications (MHBDS) with the exception that ice accretion loads may be ignored. Brakes shall be mill duty brakes meeting Association of Iron and Steel Engineers—National Electrical Manufacturers Association (AISE—NEMA) Standards. The brake setting shall be no more than 90% and no less than 40% of the continuous rated capacity. The delay setting for each set of brakes shall be staggered to prevent all brakes from setting simultaneously and shock loading the machinery.

There are no options other than the correct type of machinery brakes for failsafe and timed gradual setting. Brakes are an integral part of the movable bridge design. Brakes provide stopping and parking of the bascule leaves and are MHBDS required devices for the safety of the traveling public, both vehicular and navigation gradual setting. The brake application must be gradual as per the specified thruster to prevent damage to the bridge, loss of power or E-stop. Brakes are an integral part of the movable bridge design. Brakes provide stopping and parking of the bascule leaves and are MHBDS required devices for the safety of the traveling public, both vehicular and navigation.

With certain exceptions, FTA’s Buy America requirements prevent FTA from obligating an amount that may be appropriated to carry out its program for a project unless “the steel, iron, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States.” 49 U.S.C. 5323(j)(1). A manufactured product is considered produced in the United States if: (1) All of the manufacturing processes for the product take place in the United States; and (2) all of the components of the product are of U.S. origin. A component is considered of U.S. origin if it is manufactured in the United States, regardless of the origin of its subcomponents. 49 CFR 661.5(d). If, however, FTA determines that “the steel, iron, and goods produced in the United States are not produced in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or are not of a satisfactory quality,” then FTA may issue a waiver (non-availability waiver). 49 U.S.C. 5323(j)(2)(B); 49 CFR 661.7(c).

Throughout the brake manufacturing industry, it is well documented that there are no brakes made in the United States that satisfy both the project requirements and the Buy America requirements. FDOT engaged in extensive efforts to identify and locate qualified domestically manufactured brake products, including contacting numerous known bridge brake manufacturers. FDOT's recent experience on similar projects has shown that contractors have been unable to locate qualified bridge brakes of either the shoe or disc type that have all components made in the United States. FDOT also has made an extensive effort to locate qualified domestically made brake products, including contacting known bridge brake manufacturers including the following manufactures: Johnson Industries, Mondel (made by Magnetek), Gemco (made by Ametek), Link Controls, Bubenzer, and Hiden. The manufacturers confirmed that they do not produce a product that meets both the Buy America provisions in accordance 49 CFR 661.7(c) and 49 U.S.C. 5323(j), and the requirements of AASHTO MHBDS Articles 5.5, 5.6 and 6.7.13. FDOT also conducted an internet search, which revealed several other brake manufacturers, but none make a qualified brake in the United States. Additionally, FDOT's program management consultant contacted several contractors that supply machinery and brakes for movable bridges but had no success in locating a qualified brake made entirely in the United States. FDOT's Program Management Consultant also has discussed this issue with other design engineers experienced in movable bridge machinery design and confirmed that they too have not been able to locate qualified brake products which are made in the United States.

Finally, under 49 U.S.C. 5323(j)(6), FTA cannot deny an application for a waiver based on non-availability unless FTA can certify that (i) the steel, iron, or manufactured good (the "item") is produced in the United States in a sufficient and reasonably available amount; and (ii) the item produced in the United States is of a satisfactory quality. Additionally, FTA must provide a list of known manufacturers in the United States from which the item can be obtained. FTA is not aware of any United States manufacturers who produce the motor brakes and machinery brakes required for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification project.

FDOT's efforts to identify domestic manufacturers for the motor brakes and

machinery brakes required for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification project were unsuccessful. FTA proposes to grant FDOT a non-availability waiver of the Buy America requirements for the motor brakes and machinery brakes required for the SE 3rd Avenue Bascule Bridge Modification project.

FTA is publishing this Notice to seek public and industry comment from all interested parties in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5323(j)(3)(A). Such information and comments will help FTA understand completely the facts surrounding the request, including the merits of the request. After consideration of the comments, FTA will publish a second notice in the **Federal Register** with a response to comments and noting any changes made to the proposed waiver because of the comments received. A full copy of the request has been placed in docket number FTA-2017-0014.

K. Jane Williams,

Acting Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2017-23381 Filed 10-26-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE P

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Fiscal Service

Bureau of the Fiscal Service

Notice of Rate To Be Used for Federal Debt Collection, and Discount and Rebate Evaluation

AGENCY: Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Fiscal Service, Treasury.

ACTION: Notice of rate to be used for Federal debt collection, and discount and rebate evaluation.

SUMMARY: The Secretary of the Treasury is responsible for computing and publishing the percentage rate that is used in assessing interest charges for outstanding debts owed to the Government. This rate is also used by agencies as a comparison point in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a cash discount. In addition, this rate is used in determining when agencies should pay purchase card invoices when the card issuer offers a rebate. Notice is hereby given that the applicable rate for calendar year 2018 is 1.00 percent.

DATES: January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Denice M. Wilson, E-Commerce Division, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, 401 14th

Street SW., Washington, DC 20227 (Telephone: 202-874-9428).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rate is used in assessing interest charges for outstanding debts owed to the Government (The Debt Collection Act of 1982, as amended (codified at 31 U.S.C. Section 3717)). This rate is also used by agencies as a comparison point in evaluating the cost-effectiveness of a cash discount. In addition, this rate is used in determining when agencies should pay purchase card invoices when the card issuer offers a rebate (5 CFR 1315.8).

The rate reflects the current value of funds to the Treasury for use in connection with Federal Cash Management systems and is based on investment rates set for purposes of Public Law 95-147, 91 Stat. 1227 (October 28, 1977). Computed each year by averaging Treasury Tax and Loan (TT&L) investment rates for the 12-month period ending every September 30, rounded to the nearest whole percentage, for applicability effective each January 1. Quarterly revisions are made if the annual average, on a moving basis, changes by 2 percentage points. The rate for calendar year 2018 reflects the average investment rates for the 12-month period that ended September 30, 2017.

Authority: 31 U.S.C. Section 3717.

Dated: October 16, 2017.

Ronda L. Kent,

Assistant Commissioner, Payment Management, and Chief Disbursing Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017-23419 Filed 10-26-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-AS-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Notice of Meeting; National Research Advisory Council

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) that the National Research Advisory Council will hold a meeting on Wednesday, December 6, 2017, at the Atlanta Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Conference Room 5a110 at 1670 Clairmont Rd., Decatur, Georgia 30033. The meeting will convene at 9:00 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. This meeting is open to the public.

The agenda will include scientific presentations on animal research, mental health, rehabilitation and a facility tour. Additional presentations will include: Balancing research challenges, an overview of the animal research program from the Chief