



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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STB PROPOSES TO ELIMINATE UNNEEDED DATA COLLECTION AND STRENGTHEN SERVICE RELIABILITY OVERSIGHT AS PART OF BROADER DATA MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE

The Surface Transportation Board today issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to streamline and improve reporting requirements for Class I rail carriers, proposing to eliminate the now-unnecessary supplemental reporting of Positive Train Control (PTC) expenditures and proposing to require the reporting of two critical metrics for the Board's objective to ensure rail service reliability. The Board expects today's NPRM to be one initial component of a four-part effort to enhance, focus, and automate the agency's data collection:

1. **Eliminating Unneeded Data Collections.** The Board collects certain data that are outdated, rendered unnecessary by overlapping measures, or cited seldomly by shippers, railroads, and the broader public. For example, even though railroads implemented PTC years ago, the agency has maintained a requirement—adopted in the middle of nationwide PTC installation efforts—for carriers to supplement the R-1 financial and operating report by breaking out PTC-related expenditures. This detailed, time-consuming accounting process is now of limited utility. As such, today the Board is proposing to eliminate this supplemental reporting and therefore reduce paperwork burden. In the coming months, Chairman Fuchs expects the Board to consider eliminating additional collections.
2. **Strengthening Mission-Critical Data Collections.** As the Board looks to focus its data collections, it will consider addressing as appropriate any metric that presents a misleading indication of network performance or health or that has underlying data quality failing to meet acceptable standards. This effort will also involve ensuring the Board's collections include the highest-utility metrics. Two metrics that are widely cited and deployed by railroads, shippers, and the broader public, but that the Board does not currently collect, are (1) service as measured by compliance with the original estimated time of arrival (OETA) and (2) service at the first or last mile, as captured by industry spot and pull (ISP) measuring local placements and pick-ups. Today, the Board is proposing to reinstitute these metrics (with targeted definitional changes to address past concerns), enabling the agency to better monitor rail service reliability, assess changes in service levels, and address possible future regional and national service lapses. Simultaneously, the Board is implementing enhanced internal procedures across data

collections to strengthen the identification of outliers, missing data, and other indicators of data quality issues.

3. **Streamlining Filing and Automating Processing.** The Board is also improving efficiency by replacing manually tabulated forms with templates that allow for automated reporting and data ingestion. For example, through new templates, the Board has cut the number of data points in its revenue, expenses, and income reporting by more than 75 percent. The agency has also eliminated over 3,000 data points from annual freight commodity statistic reporting. New templates allow for direct processing of uniform reports and more expeditious release to the Board's public website.
4. **Improving Data Visualization.** The Board's website presents agency data largely as spreadsheet attachments that require manual aggregation across time periods, railroads, and other variables. The Board has procured more advanced computing tools that will enable the agency and public, including shippers, to interact with the data more easily, facilitating fast and low-burden customized queries and outputs to help better understand network performance and health and drive decision-making. The Board expects to begin to roll out an enhanced mechanism for accessing data in the first half of 2026.

Today's action follows a request from the Association of American Railroads (AAR) and comments from shippers in multiple dockets. Last year, AAR petitioned the Board to reopen the 2013 docket, Docket No. EP 706, and eliminate the PTC supplement as no longer necessary. Because the Board is issuing the NPRM in Docket No. EP 787, in a separate decision issued today, the Board denied as moot AAR's petition in Docket No. EP 706.

Comments on the NPRM in Docket No. EP 787 are due by October 30, 2025, and reply comments are due by November 13, 2025.

The Board's decision in Updating Class I Rail Carrier Reporting Requirements, Docket No. EP 787, may be viewed and downloaded [here](#). The Board's decision in Reporting Requirements for Positive Train Control Expenses and Investments, Docket No. EP 706, may be viewed and downloaded [here](#).

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