

BOARD TO INVESTIGATE COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT COMPLIANCE WITH CONDITIONS OF THE CN/EJ&E MERGER

The Surface Transportation Board is requesting feedback from Chicago-area communities affected by the merger of Canadian National Railway with the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway Co. The Board will also audit CN's informational reports that the railroad is required to file with the STB as a condition of the merger.

The Board today is sending out questionnaires to elected officials in the 33 communities in Illinois and Indiana affected by the merger as part of its efforts to determine whether CN's compliance reports are accurate and complete. The Board is asking about train noise and vibration, train volumes and street blockages, vehicle delays and traffic congestion at selected rail/highway at-grade crossings, operational accidents, and identification signs at crossings.

The Board has tasked an independent, third-party consultant, HDR One Company of Omaha, Neb., to audit the informational reports CN has provided the Board and follow up on concerns raised in the questionnaire answers. The Board will receive interim progress reports from HDR with a final report scheduled to be completed by March.

"Today's action is in direct response to the concerns voiced by local community and elected leaders," said STB Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III, who has visited affected communities twice since being appointed last summer. "The Board imposed an unprecedented number of environmental and safety conditions to mitigate the harm to local communities. The oversight process offers a fair and transparent way to assure that the railroad fully complies with these conditions."

The decision and conditions are included in the decision Canadian National Ry. And Grand Trunk Corp.,-Control-EJ&E West Co.,STB Finance Docket No. 35087. Documents are available at www.stb.dot.gov. The Board has also set up a Web site on the CN/EJ&E compliance and monitoring at www.stbfinancedocket35087.com. The results of the questionnaires and the other activities listed above will be posted mid-February.