

Surface Transportation Board Advises Public of Procedures to Be Followed in Board's Review of Proposal by "Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern" Affiliate to Acquire "I&M Rail Link"

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Linda J. Morgan announced today that the Board has issued a notice advising the public of the procedures to be followed in the Board's consideration of the proposed acquisition of the lines of I&M Rail Link, LLC (I&M) by the Iowa, Chicago & Eastern Railroad Corporation (ICE), a subsidiary of the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad (DM&E). The acquisition of the I&M's 1,125 miles of line, plus approximately 275 miles of trackage rights, would more than double the size of the 1,100-mile DM&E, which the Board recently authorized to undertake a billion-dollar project to build a new railroad line into Wyoming's Powder River Basin and to upgrade its system (see Surface Transportation Board "News" release No. 02-5, issued January 30, 2002).

Today's notice advises the public that the I&M proposal was filed at the Board on Friday, June 7, 2002. Under the exemption procedures being invoked by ICE, the acquisition could go forward as early as June 28, 2002, unless stayed by the Board. Referencing previous expressions of concern about the I&M proposal, the Board's notice indicates that petitions to stay the proposal are due by **June 14, 2002**. Comments that parties wish the Board to consider prior to the scheduled effective date must be filed by **June 19, 2002**. Replies to stay petitions and other comments are due by **June 21, 2002**. Copies of stay petitions and comments must be provided to ICE's representative by **June 14** and **June 19, 2002**, respectively.

Today's notice was issued in the case entitled *Iowa Chicago & Eastern Railroad Corporation--Acquisition and Operation Exemption--Lines of I&M Rail Link, LLC*, STB Finance Docket No. 34177. A printed copy of the decision is available for a fee by contacting **D~ 2 D~ Legal Copy Service, Suite 405, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006, telephone (202) 293-7776**, or via da2dalegal@earthlink.net. The decision also is available for viewing and downloading via the Board's website at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

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