

## **STB PROPOSES TO MODERNIZE REGULATIONS FOR TARIFF FILINGS BY WATER CARRIERS IN THE NONCONTIGUOUS DOMESTIC TRADE**

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) today proposed modifying its regulations for tariff filings by water carriers operating in the non-contiguous domestic trade (transportation between the contiguous 48 states and Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories). The proposed regulations would create a new process allowing water carriers to publish, file, and keep tariffs electronically. The Board anticipates that the proposed electronic process would help to reduce costs and burdens on both water carriers and the Board.

Water carriers under the Board's jurisdiction are statutorily required to publish, file, and keep tariffs containing the rates, charges, rules, and classifications applicable to their services. Today's proposal would establish an electronic alternative to the current regulations, which date from the late 1990s and largely contemplate tariff filings in paper format. Although many water carriers have received special permission from the Board to depart from the paper-based requirements, the proposed rule would further streamline tariff filing. Under the proposal, water carriers could file an annual certification with an active link to the carrier's electronic tariff on the Internet, thereby eliminating the burdens and costs associated with paper tariff submissions that many carriers incur on a regular, if not daily basis. The proposed rule would also require that electronic tariffs be available to the public without onerous registration requirements that could frustrate public access to the tariffs. Lastly, the proposal would require water carriers to maintain and keep available historical tariffs.

Today's initiative is an outgrowth of the work of the Board's Regulatory Reform Task Force (RRTF), which was created last year to comply with the spirit of Executive Order 13,777. The RRTF's primary objective is to identify Board rules and practices that are burdensome, unnecessary, or outdated and to make recommendations on streamlining or eliminating them. The RRTF identified the current water carrier tariff regulations as imposing significant costs on water carriers as well as the Board.

The Board's notice of proposed rulemaking in [Water Carrier Tariff Filing Procedures, EP 743](#), may be viewed and downloaded at [www.stb.gov](http://www.stb.gov), under "E-LIBRARY / Decisions & Notices / 12 / 21 / 18".

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