

organizations have worked with FMCSA to develop and promote research and technology designed to achieve mutual commercial motor vehicle safety goals and objectives. Time will be allotted for questions and answers following each panel, and dialogue between attendees and presenters is encouraged.

Where and When: Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, the Delaware Room, 2660 Woodley Road, NW., Washington, DC 20008, on Sunday, January 11, 2004, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Registration: This forum is listed as a session in the TRB Annual Meeting Program and all registrants are welcome to attend. TRB registration is not required to attend the forum and it is open to the public at no cost. To register for the TRB Annual Meeting, visit www.trb.org. To attend the forum only, send an e-mail to: R&TPartnerships@fmcsa.dot.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Albert Alvarez, Office of Research and Technology (MC-RTR), Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 400 Virginia Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20024; telephone (202) 385-2387 or e-mail albert.alvarez@fmcsa.dot.gov. Or, contact Mike Lange in the same office at (202) 385-2373 or e-mail michael.lang@fmcsa.dot.gov. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., E.S.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Forum attendees will receive an Information Packet on current programs the Office of Research and Technology is working on. While the forum will be open to the public, it will be limited to the space available. Individuals requiring special needs/accommodations (sign, reader, etc.), please call Joanie Cole at (202) 334-2287, or e-mail jcole@nas.edu.

Issued on: November 20, 2003.

Annette M. Sandberg,

Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket No. FRA-2000-7257; Notice No. 31]

Railroad Safety Advisory Committee ("RSAC"); Working Group Activity Update

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Announcement of Railroad Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) Working Group Activities.

SUMMARY: FRA is updating its announcement of RSAC's working group activities to reflect their current status. For additional details on completed activities see prior working group activity notices (68 FR 25677).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Trish Butera or Lydia Leeds, RSAC Coordinators, FRA, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Mailstop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6213 or Grady Cothen, Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development, FRA, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Mailstop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6302.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice serves to update FRA's last announcement of working group activities and status reports of September 18, 2003, (68 FR 54777). The twenty-first full Committee meeting was held May 20, 2003. The twenty-second meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2003, at the Washington Plaza Hotel.

Since its first meeting in April of 1996, the RSAC has accepted eighteen tasks. Status for each of the tasks is provided below:

Open Tasks

Task 96-4—Reviewing the appropriateness of the agency's current policy regarding the applicability of existing and proposed regulations to tourist, excursion, scenic, and historic railroads. This Task was accepted on April 2, 1996, and a Working Group was established. The Working Group monitored the steam locomotive regulations task. Planned future activities involve the review of other regulations for possible adaptation to the safety needs of tourist and historic railroads. Contact: Grady Cothen (202) 493-6302.

Task 97-1—Developing crashworthiness specifications to promote the integrity of the locomotive cab in accidents resulting from collisions. This Task was accepted on June 24, 1997. A Task Force on engineering issues was established by the Working Group on Locomotive Crashworthiness to review collision history and design options and additional research was commissioned. The Working Group reviewed results of the research and is drafting performance-based standards for freight and passenger locomotives to present to the RSAC for consideration. An accident review task force has evaluated the potential effectiveness of suggested improvements. The Working Group

reached tentative agreement for a proposed rule. The NPRM and Regulatory Impact Analysis have been revised to reflect the changes. The next step is for the Working Group to complete its review of the NPRM. Contact: Charles Bielitz (202) 493-6314.

Task 97-2—Evaluating the extent to which environmental, sanitary, and other working conditions in locomotive cabs affect the crew's health and the safe operation of locomotives, proposing standards where appropriate. This Task was accepted June 24, 1997.

(Sanitation) (Completed)

(Noise exposure) The Cab Working Conditions Working Group met most recently in Chicago, November 12-14, 2002. A tentative consensus was reached on the draft rule text. The Working Group approved the NPRM. On June 27, 2003, the full RSAC gave consensus by ballot on NPRM. FRA is completing review of the Regulatory Impact Analysis. The next step is to publish the NPRM in the **Federal Register**.

(Cab Temperature) (Completed)

Note: Additional related topics may be further considered by the Working Group in the future, including effect of vibrations and crew emergency egress. Contact: Jeffrey Horn (202) 493-6283.

Task 97-3—Developing event recorder data survivability standards. This Task was accepted on June 24, 1997. On November 12, 2003, the RSAC gave consensus by ballot on the NPRM. The next step is to publish the NPRM in the **Federal Register**.

Contact: Edward Pritchard (202) 493-6247.

Task 97-4 and *Task 97-5*—Defining Positive Train Control (PTC) functionalities, describing available technologies, evaluating costs and benefits of potential systems, and considering implementation opportunities and challenges, including demonstration and deployment.

Task 97-6—Revising various regulations to address the safety implications of processor-based signal and train control technologies, including communications-based operating systems. These three tasks were accepted on September 30, 1997, and assigned to a single Working Group.

(Report to the Administrator) A Data and Implementation Task Force, formed to address issues such as assessment of costs and benefits and technical readiness, completed a report on the future of PTC systems. The report was accepted as RSAC's Report to the Administrator at the September 8, 1999,