

stated that the SecuriLock electronic engine immobilizer device makes conventional theft methods such as hot-wiring or attacking the ignition lock cylinder ineffective and virtually eliminates drive-away thefts.

Ford also compared the device proposed for its vehicle line with other devices which NHTSA has determined to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as would compliance with the parts-marking requirements. Ford finds that the lack of an alarm or attention attracting device does not compromise the theft deterrent performance of a system such as the SecuriLock. Ford stated that its proposed device is functionally equivalent to the systems used in previous vehicle lines which were deemed effective and granted exemptions from the parts-marking requirements of the theft prevention standard. Additionally, theft data have indicated a decline in theft rates for vehicle lines that have been equipped with antitheft devices similar to that which Ford proposes to install on the new line. In these instances, the agency has concluded that the lack of a visual or audio alarm has not prevented these antitheft devices from being effective protection against theft.

On the basis of this comparison, Ford has concluded that the antitheft device proposed for its Five Hundred vehicle line is no less effective than those devices in the lines for which NHTSA has already granted full exemption from the parts-marking requirements.

Based on the evidence submitted by Ford, the agency may grant a petition for an exemption from the parts-marking requirements of 541 if it determines that the standard antitheft device for the vehicle line is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR Part 541).

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 33106 and 49 CFR 543.7(b), the agency finds that Ford has provided adequate reasons for its belief that the antitheft device for the Five Hundred vehicle line will reduce and deter theft. This conclusion is based on the information Ford provided about its device. The agency concludes that the device will provide four of the five types of performance listed in § 543.6(a)(3): promoting activation; preventing defeat or circumvention of the device by unauthorized persons; preventing operation of the vehicle by unauthorized entrants; and ensuring the reliability and durability of the device.

For the foregoing reasons, the agency hereby grants in full Ford's petition for exemption from the Five Hundred vehicle

line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR Part 541. The agency notes that 49 CFR Part 541, Appendix A-1, identifies those lines that are exempted from the Theft Prevention Standard for a given model year. 49 CFR Part 543.7(f) contains publication requirements incident to the disposition of all Part 543 petitions. Advanced listing, including the release of future product nameplates, the beginning model year for which the petition is granted and a general description of the antitheft device is necessary in order to notify law enforcement agencies of new vehicle lines exempted from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

If Ford decides not to use the exemption for this line, it must formally notify the agency, and, thereafter, the line must be fully marked as required by 49 CFR Parts 541.5 and 541.6 (marking of major component parts and replacement parts).

NHTSA notes that if Ford wishes in the future to modify the device on which this exemption is based, the company may have to submit a petition to modify the exemption.

Part 543.7(d) states that a Part 543 exemption applies only to vehicles that belong to a line exempted under this part and equipped with the anti-theft device on which the line's exemption is based. Further, § 543.9(c)(2) provides for the submission of petitions "to modify an exemption to permit the use of an antitheft device similar to but differing from the one specified in that exemption."

The agency wishes to minimize the administrative burden that Part 543.9(c)(2) could place on exempted vehicle manufacturers and itself. The agency did not intend Part 543 to require the submission of a modification petition for every change to the components or design of an antitheft device. The significance of many such changes could be *de minimis*. Therefore, NHTSA suggests that if the manufacturer contemplates making any changes the effects of which might be characterized as *de minimis*, it should consult the agency before preparing and submitting a petition to modify.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 33106; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: August 29, 2006.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

[FR Doc. E6-14583 Filed 8-31-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34918]

Keokuk Junction Railway Co., d/b/a Peoria & Western Railway—Lease and Operation Exemption—BNSF Railway Company

Keokuk Junction Railway Co., d/b/a Peoria & Western Railway (PWRY),¹ a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to lease from BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) and operate an approximately 42.1-mile portion of BNSF's line of railroad known as the Yates City Subdivision, extending between milepost 94.3 at Vermont, and milepost 52.20 at Farmington, in Fulton County, IL, including the Dunfermline industrial spur.

PWRY certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of the transaction will not result in the creation of a Class II or Class I rail carrier.

PWRY had intended to consummate the transaction on August 15, 2006. However, by decision served on August 10, 2006, the effective date of the exemption was stayed until further order of the Board. Accordingly, consummation of the transaction cannot occur until further order of the Board. Also on that date, a motion for protective order was filed. A protective order was served on August 25, 2006.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34918, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Daniel A. LaKemper, General Counsel, Keokuk Junction Railway Co., d/b/a Peoria & Western Railway, 1318 S. Johanson Road, Peoria, IL 61607.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at www.stb.dot.gov.

Decided: August 25, 2006.

¹ PWRY is controlled by Pioneer Railcorp. See *Pioneer Railcorp—Continuance in Control Exemption—Gettysburg & Northern Railroad Co.*, STB Finance Docket No. 34010 (STB served Feb. 27, 2001).

By the Board, Joseph H. Dettmar, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.
Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.
 [FR Doc. E6-14407 Filed 8-31-06; 8:45 am]
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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Advisory Committee on CARES Business Plan Studies; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under the Public Law

92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Advisory Committee on CARES Business Plan Studies will meet as indicated below. The meetings are open to the public.

Location	Date	Time
The Shaw's Center, 1 Lexington Avenue, Brockton, MA 02301	September 18, 2006	10 a.m. until 5:15 p.m.
VA Medical Center, 2250 Leestown Road Division, Auditorium, Building 1, Lexington, KY 40511.	September 20, 2006	1 p.m. until 5 p.m.
VA Medical Center, Walla Walla Theatre, 77 Wainwright Drive, Building 74, Walla Walla, WA.	September 25, 2006	9 a.m. until 12 noon.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on proposed business plans at those VA facility sites identified in May 2004 as requiring further study by the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Decision document.

The objectives of the meetings in Brockton, MA and Lexington, KY are to communicate the Secretary's decision on the specific options to be evaluated and the timeframe for the completion of the studies. Additional presentations will focus on the VA-selected

contractor's methodology and tools to evaluate the remaining options. The agendas will also accommodate public commentary on implementation issues associated with each option.

Featured agenda items of the meeting in Walla Walla, WA include a discussion of the summary of the proposed space plan and siting of the new multi-specialty outpatient clinic on the VA Medical Center Walla Walla campus.

Interested persons may attend and present oral or written statements to the Committee. For additional information

regarding the meetings, please contact Mr. Jay Halpern, Designated Federal Officer, (00CARES), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20024 by phone at (202) 273-5994, or by e-mail at jay.halpern@hq.med.va.gov.

Dated: August 28, 2006.

By direction of the Secretary.

E. Philip Riggan,
Committee Management Officer.
 [FR Doc. 06-7386 Filed 8-31-06; 8:45 am]

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