

Commission staff estimates that 13 custodians, including 7 sub-custodians, spend approximately 2,330 hours (by support staff) annually in transmitting such reports to funds.<sup>7</sup> In addition, approximately 768 funds (*i.e.*, four percent of all funds) deal directly with a securities depository and may request periodic reports from their depository. Commission staff estimates that depositories spend approximately 179 hours (by support staff) annually transmitting reports to the 768 funds.<sup>8</sup> The total annual burden estimate for compliance with rule 17f-4's reporting requirement is therefore 2,509 hours.<sup>9</sup>

If a fund deals directly with a securities depository, rule 17f-4 requires that the fund implement internal control systems reasonably designed to prevent an unauthorized officer's instructions (by providing at least for the form, content, and means of giving, recording, and reviewing all officers' instructions). All funds that seek to rely on rule 17f-4 should have already implemented these internal control systems when the rule was amended. Therefore, there is no ongoing burden associated with this collection of information requirement.<sup>10</sup>

Based on the foregoing, the Commission staff estimates that the total annual hour burden of the rule's collection of information requirements is 2,509 hours.

The estimate of average burden hours is made solely for the purposes of the Paperwork Reduction Act. This estimate is not derived from a comprehensive or even representative survey or study of the costs of Commission rules.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information

industry representatives that custodians and depositories transmit these reports to clients in the normal course of their activities as a good business practice regardless of whether they are requested. Therefore, for purposes of this PRA estimate, the Commission staff assumes that custodians transmit the reports to all fund clients.

<sup>7</sup> (9,984 fund clients × 2 reports) = 19,968 transmissions. The staff estimates that each transmission would take approximately 7 minutes for a total of approximately 2,330 hours (7 minutes × 19,968 transmissions).

<sup>8</sup> (768 fund clients who may deal directly with a securities depository × 2 reports) = 1,536 transmissions. The staff estimates that each transmission would take approximately 7 minutes for a total of approximately 179 hours (7 minutes × 1,536 transmissions).

<sup>9</sup> 2,330 hours for custodians and 179 hours for securities depositories.

<sup>10</sup> The Commission staff assumes that new funds relying on 17f-4 would choose to use a custodian instead of directly dealing with a securities depository because of the high costs associated with maintaining an account with a securities depository. Thus new funds would not be subject to this condition.

unless it displays a currently valid control number.

Written comments are invited on: (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Commission's estimate of the burden of the collections of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burdens of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to David Bottom, Director/Chief Information Officer, Securities and Exchange Commission, C/O John R. Pezzullo, 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549; or send an email to: [PRA\\_Mailbox@sec.gov](mailto:PRA_Mailbox@sec.gov).

Dated: December 15, 2021.

**J. Matthew DeLesDernier**,  
Assistant Secretary.

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**BILLING CODE 8011-01-P**

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## SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

[Docket No. SSA-2021-0048]

### Rate for Assessment on Direct Payment of Fees to Representatives in 2022

**AGENCY:** Social Security Administration (SSA).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** We are announcing the assessment percentage rate under the Social Security Act (Act) is 6.3 percent for 2022.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jeffrey C. Blair, Associate General Counsel for Program Law, Office of the General Counsel, Social Security Administration, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235-6401. Phone: (410) 965-3157, email [Jeff.Blair@ssa.gov](mailto:Jeff.Blair@ssa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A claimant may appoint a qualified individual as a representative to act on his or her behalf in matters before the Social Security Administration (SSA). If the claimant is entitled to past-due benefits and was represented either by an attorney or by a non-attorney representative who has met certain

prerequisites, the Act provides that we withhold up to 25 percent of the past-due benefits and use that money to pay the representative's approved fee directly to the representative.

When we pay the representative's approved fee directly to the representative, we must collect from that fee payment an assessment to recover the costs we incur in determining and paying representatives' fees. The Act provides that the assessment we collect will be the lesser of two amounts: A specified dollar limit; or the amount determined by multiplying the fee we are paying by the assessment percentage rate.<sup>1</sup>

The Act initially set the dollar limit at \$75 in 2004 and provides that the limit will be adjusted annually based on changes in the cost-of-living.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the maximum dollar limit for the assessment is \$104, as we announced in the **Federal Register** on October 22, 2021 (86 FR 58715, 58716).

The Act requires us each year to set the assessment percentage rate at the lesser of 6.3 percent or the percentage rate necessary to achieve full recovery of the costs we incur to determine and pay representatives' fees.<sup>3</sup>

Based on the best available data, we have determined that the current rate of 6.3 percent will continue for 2022. We will continue to review our costs for these services on a yearly basis.

**Michelle King**,

Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance, and Management.

[FR Doc. 2021-27474 Filed 12-17-21; 8:45 am]

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## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 1073 (Sub-No. 1X)]

### Alabama & Florida Railway Co., Inc.—Abandonment Exemption—in Geneva, Coffee, and Covington Counties, Ala.

Alabama & Florida Railway Co., Inc. (A&F), has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR part 1152 subpart F—*Exemption Abandonments* to abandon approximately 42.9 miles of rail line between milepost 581.3 at Andalusia, Ala., and milepost 624.2 at Geneva, Ala. (the Line). The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Codes 36340, 36420, 36421, 36453, 36467, and 36477.

A&F certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the Line for at least two

<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. 406(d), 406(e), and 1383(d)(2).

<sup>2</sup> 42 U.S.C. 406(d)(2)(A) and 1383(d)(2)(C)(ii)(I).

<sup>3</sup> 42 U.S.C. 406(d)(2)(B)(ii) and 1383(d)(2)(C)(ii)(II).

years; (2) there is no overhead traffic that has been, or would need to be, rerouted as a result of the proposed abandonment; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the Line (or by state or local government on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the Line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or has been decided in favor of a complainant within the two-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7(b) and 1105.8(c) (notice of environmental and historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to government agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment Portion Goshen Branch Between Firth & Ammon, in Bingham & Bonneville Counties, Idaho*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received,<sup>1</sup> this exemption will be effective on January 19, 2022, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>2</sup> formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2), and interim trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by December 30, 2021.<sup>3</sup> Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by January 10, 2022.

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. AB 1073 (Sub-No. 1X), should be filed with the Surface Transportation Board via e-filing on the Board's website. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on A&F's representative, Crystal M. Zorbaugh, Baker & Miller

<sup>1</sup> Persons interested in submitting an OFA must first file a formal expression of intent to file an offer, indicating the type of financial assistance they wish to provide (*i.e.*, subsidy or purchase) and demonstrating that they are preliminarily financially responsible. See 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2)(i).

<sup>2</sup> The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Serv. Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

<sup>3</sup> Filing fees for OFAs and trail use requests can be found at 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25) and (27), respectively.

PLLC, 2401 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio.

A&F has filed a combined environmental and historic report that addresses the potential effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. OEA will issue a Draft Environmental Assessment (Draft EA) by December 23, 2021. The Draft EA will be available to interested persons on the Board's website, by writing to OEA, or by calling OEA at (202) 245-0294. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Comments on environmental or historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the Draft EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), A&F shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the Line. If consummation has not been effected by A&F's filing of a notice of consummation by December 20, 2022, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

Board decisions and notices are available at [www.stb.gov](http://www.stb.gov).

Decided: December 14, 2021.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

**Regena Smith-Bernard,**  
*Clearance Clerk.*

[FR Doc. 2021-27470 Filed 12-17-21; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

[Docket No. FAA-2021-1161]

#### Agency Information Collection Activities: Requests for Comments; Clearance of a Renewed Approval of Information Collection: Flight and Duty Limitations and Rest Requirements— Flightcrew Members

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, FAA invites public comments about our

intention to request the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to renew an information collection. The collection involves reporting exceeded flight duty periods and flight times, including scheduled maximum and actual flight duty periods and flight times, basic flight information (*e.g.*, city pairs, departure times, flight number), and reason for exceedance. Reporting and recordkeeping are required any time a certificated air carrier has exceeded a maximum daily flight time limit or a maximum daily Flight Duty Period (FDP) limit. It is also required for the voluntary development of a Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS), and for fatigue training. The information is necessary to monitor trends in exceedance and possible underlying systemic causes requiring operator action, and to determine whether operator is scheduling realistically.

**DATES:** Written comments should be submitted by February 18, 2022.

**ADDRESSES:** Please send written comments:

*By Electronic Docket:*

[www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (Enter docket number into search field).

*By mail:* Sandra Ray, Federal Aviation Administration, Voluntary Programs and Rulemaking Section AFS-260, 1187 Thorn Run Road, Suite 200, Coraopolis, PA 15108.

*By fax:* 412-239-3063.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Chester Piolunek, Jr. by email at: [Chester.Piolunek@faa.gov](mailto:Chester.Piolunek@faa.gov); phone: 202-267-3711.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Public Comments Invited:* You are asked to comment on any aspect of this information collection, including (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for FAA's performance; (b) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (c) ways for FAA to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collection; and (d) ways that the burden could be minimized without reducing the quality of the collected information. The agency will summarize and/or include your comments in the request for OMB's clearance of this information collection.

*OMB Control Number:* 2120-0751.

*Title:* Flight and Duty Limitations and Rest Requirements—Flightcrew Members.

*Form Numbers:* None.

*Type of Review:* Renewal of an information collection.

*Background:* The FAA collects reports from air carriers conducting passenger operations certificated under 14 CFR part 121 as prescribed in 14 CFR part