

SYSTEM(S) OF RECORDS:

SSA will disclose records from the “Supplemental Security Income Record and Special Veterans Benefits” system of records, 60–0103, last fully published at 71 FR 1830 (January 11, 2006), and updated at 72 FR 69723 (December 10, 2007), 83 FR 31250–31251 (July 3, 2018), 83 FR. 54969 (November 1, 2018), and 89 FR 825 (January 5, 2024). DoD/DMDC will disclose records from the following system of records: DMDC 01, entitled “Defense Manpower Data Center Data Base,” last published in full at 84 FR 6383 (February 27, 2019), and amended at 84 FR 8698 (March 11, 2019), 84 FR 15605 (April 16, 2019), and 87 FR 32145 (May 27, 2022).

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice: 12359]

60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Request for Approval of Special Validation for Travel to a Restricted Country or Area

ACTION: Notice of request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of State is seeking Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for the information collection described below. In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are requesting comments on this collection from all interested individuals and organizations. The purpose of this notice is to allow 60 days for public comment preceding submission of the collection to OMB.

DATES: The Department will accept comments from the public up to June 24, 2024.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Web:* Persons with access to the internet may comment on this notice by going to www.Regulations.gov. You can search for the document by entering “Docket Number: DOS–2024–0006” in the Search field. Then click the “Comment Now” button and complete the comment form.

- *Email:* PPTSpecialValidations@state.gov.

- *Regular Mail:* Send written comments to: Special Validations, U.S. Department of State, CA/PPT/S/A/AP, 44132 Mercure Circle, P.O. Box 1227, Sterling, VA 20166–1227.

You must include the DS form number (if applicable), information

collection title, and the OMB control number in any correspondence.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- *Title of Information Collection:* Request for Approval for Multiple-Entry Travel to a Restricted Country or Area.
- *OMB Control Number:* 1405–0228.
- *Type of Request:* Revision of a Currently Approved Collection.
- *Originating Office:* Bureau of Consular Affairs, Passport Services, CA/PPT/S/A/AP.
- *Form Number:* No form.
- *Respondents:* Individuals requesting they be granted single or multiple-entry special validation, in accordance with 22 CFR 51.64, to use a U.S. passport to travel to, in, or through a country or area as to which U.S. passports have been declared invalid for such travel pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 211a and Executive Order 11295 (August 5, 1966) and in accordance with 22 CFR 51.63(a).

- *Estimated Number of Respondents:* 150.

- *Estimated Number of Responses:* 150.

- *Average Time per Response for single entry validation request:* 45 minutes.

- *Average Time per Response for multiple-entry validation request:* 90 minutes.

- *Total Estimated Burden Time:* 150 hours.

- *Frequency:* Once per year when the individual wishes to travel to the restricted country or area, with a single-entry validation. Once every two years for individuals with a multiple-entry validation.

- *Obligation to Respond:* Required to Obtain or Retain a Benefit.

We are soliciting public comments to permit the Department to:

- Evaluate whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department.
- Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used.

- Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected.
- Minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Please note that comments submitted in response to this Notice are public record. Before including any detailed personal information, you should be aware that your comments as submitted, including your personal information, will be available for public review.

Abstract of Proposed Collection

The Secretary of State may exercise authority, under 22 U.S.C. 211a, Executive Order 11295 (August 5, 1966), and 22 CFR 51.63, to invalidate all U.S. passports for travel to a country or area if he determines that any of three conditions exist: The country is at war with the United States; armed hostilities are in progress in the country or area; or there is imminent danger to the public health or physical safety of U.S. travelers in the country or area. The regulations of the Department of State provide that an individual’s passport may be considered for validation for travel to, in, or through a country or area despite such restriction if the individual’s travel is determined to fall within one of several categories established by the regulation 22 CFR 51.64. Without the requisite validation, use of a U.S. passport for travel to, in, or through a restricted country or area may justify revocation of the passport for misuse under 22 CFR 51.62(a)(3) and subject the traveler to felony prosecution under 18 U.S.C. 1544 for misuse of a passport or other applicable laws.

The categories of persons specified in 22 CFR 51.64(b) as being eligible for consideration for passport validation are as follows:

(a) An applicant who is a professional reporter and journalist whose trip is for the purpose of collecting and making available to the public information about the restricted country or area;

(b) An applicant who is a representative of the American Red Cross or the International Committee of the Red Cross on an officially sponsored Red Cross mission;

(c) An applicant whose trip to the restricted country or area is justified by compelling humanitarian considerations; or

(d) An applicant whose trip to the restricted country or area is otherwise in the national interest.

The proposed information collection solicits data necessary for the Passport Services Directorate to determine whether an applicant is eligible to receive a special validation in their U.S. passport book permitting the applicant to make single or multiple round-trips to a restricted country or area, subject to additional requirements. The information requested consists of the applicant’s name; a copy of the front and back of the applicant’s valid government-issued photo identification card with the applicant’s date of birth and signature; current contact information, including telephone number, email and mailing address; a

statement explaining the reason that the applicant thinks their trip is in the national interest, including proposed travel dates and the applicant's role and responsibilities on the trip; and supporting documentary evidence. For those seeking a multiple-entry special validation, applicants must also identify they are seeking the multiple-entry type of special validation and submit the following: documentation showing the applicant or their organization has a well-established history of traveling to the DPRK to work on well-monitored projects with compelling humanitarian considerations; the applicant's draft itinerary, including dates of travel and what specific work they intend to perform on each trip; and documentation that shows the applicant's humanitarian work requires that they make multiple trips to the DPRK in the next two-year period. Those who are approved for a multiple-entry special validation must also submit a final itinerary detailing dates and purpose of travel at least one month (30 days) prior to each trip to the DPRK while using their multi-entry special validation U.S. passport. Failure to provide the requested information may result in denial of a special validation to use a U.S. passport to travel to, in, or through a restricted country or area.

Effective September 1, 2017, upon determining that there is imminent danger to the public health or physical safety of U.S. travelers in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the former Secretary of State imposed a passport restriction with respect to travel to the DPRK. Such restriction was further renewed in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and most recently in 2023 for one year, effective September 1, 2023. The estimated number of recipients represents the Department of State's estimate of the annual number of special validations requests individuals will submit who wish to use their U.S. passport to travel to the DPRK, based on the current number of requests following the implementation of the Secretary of State's passport restriction. At this time, there are no other countries or areas that are the subject of passport restrictions pursuant to 22 CFR 51.63.

Methodology

Instructions for individuals seeking to apply for a special validation to use a U.S. passport to travel to, in, or through a restricted country or area is posted on a web page maintained by the Department (travel.state.gov). The web page directs applicants to submit the requested information via email to the Passport Services Directorate

(PPTSpecialValidations@state.gov) or by mail to Special Validations, U.S. Department of State, CA/PPT/S/A/AP, 44132 Mercure Circle, P.O. Box 1227, Sterling, VA 20166-1227.

Information collected in this manner will be used to facilitate the granting of special validations to U.S. nationals who are eligible. The primary purpose of soliciting the information is to establish whether an applicant is within one of the categories specified in the regulations of the Department of State codified at 22 CFR 51.64(b) and therefore eligible to be issued a U.S. passport containing a special validation enabling him or her to make one or multiple entry round-trips to a restricted country or area, and to facilitate the application for a passport of such applicants.

Donald E. Jacobson,

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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. FD 36745]

Massachusetts Coastal Railroad, LLC—Modified Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity

Massachusetts Coastal Railroad, LLC (Mass Coastal), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a notice for a modified certificate of public convenience and necessity¹ under 49 CFR part 1150 subpart C—*Modified Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity*, for Mass Coastal to operate the Plymouth line between milepost 1.7 at South Braintree, Mass., and milepost 27.1 at Plymouth, Mass. (the Line).

Mass Coastal states the Line was acquired from Penn Central Transportation Company by Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) subject to an operating easement in Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail). (Am. Notice 5.) Conrail applied to abandon the Line under Section 308(b) of the Regional Rail Reorganization Act of 1973 (45 U.S.C. 748) in Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) Docket No. AB 167 (Sub-No. 388), and an operating subsidy was offered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under agreement filed with the ICC on February 24, 1982. (Am. Notice 5.) According to Mass Coastal, the subsidy ended on May 26, 1982.

¹ Mass Coastal filed a notice on December 15, 2023, and filed an amended notice on March 29, 2023.

(*Id.*) Bay Colony subsequently filed a notice for a modified certificate of public convenience and necessity, and the ICC found the Line qualified for operation under a modified rail certificate. (*Id.*); *see Bay Colony R.R.—Modified Rail Certificate*, FD 29963 (ICC served June 29, 1982). According to Mass Coastal, although Bay Colony's operating agreement with MBTA expired, MBTA agreed in a 1993 letter that Bay Colony would have the first right to negotiate to operate the Line for freight service. (Am. Notice 3–4.) Mass Coastal explains that it has entered into an agreement with Bay Colony to acquire all of Bay Colony's remaining operating rights and rail assets, including its first right to negotiate to operate the Line for freight service.² (*See* Am. Notice 3.) Mass Coastal states that MBTA has consented “to the extent required.” (Am. Notice 3; *see also id.*, Ex. A (Notice to and Consent of MBTA).) Mass Coastal states that it has received an inquiry from a potential freight shipper and has begun discussions with MBTA regarding an operating agreement. (Am. Notice 4.)

The Line qualifies for a modified certificate of public convenience and necessity. *See Common Carrier Status of States, State Agencies & Instrumentalities & Pol. Subdivs.*, FD 28990F (ICC served July 16, 1981); 49 CFR 1150.22. Mass Coastal states that no subsidy is involved and that there will be no preconditions that shippers must meet to receive service. (Am. Notice 6.) Mass Coastal's notice also includes a certificate of liability insurance coverage. (Am. Notice, Ex. B.)

This notice will be served on the Association of American Railroads (Car Service Division), as agent for all railroads subscribing to the car-service and car-hire agreement, at 425 Third Street SW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20024; and on the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association at 50 F Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001.

Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: April 22, 2024.

² On March 29, 2024, Bay Colony filed, in Docket No. FD 29963, a notice of intent to terminate service on the Line, which will become effective on May 28, 2024. *See* 49 CFR 1150.24. Because Mass Coastal now has authority to commence operations at any time, *see* 49 CFR 1150.23(a) (“Operations may commence immediately on the filing” of the modified certificate), there will be no break in the availability of the Line for freight service.