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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Research and Innovative Technology Administration**

**Agency Information Collection; Activity Under OMB Review; Confidential Close Call Reporting System**

**AGENCY:** Research & Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice

**SUMMARY:** In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) described below is being forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval for renewal of information collection supporting a multi-year research study that aims at improving rail safety by analyzing information on close calls and other unsafe occurrences in the rail industry. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection. The Federal Register notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on the following collection of information was

published on May 10, 2013 (78 FR 27479) and the comment period ended on July 10, 2013. The 60-day notice produced no comments.

**DATES:** Written comments should be submitted by [insert date 30 days from publication date].

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Demetra V. Collia, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Advanced Studies, RTS-31, E324-302, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001; Phone No. (202) 366-1610; Fax No. (202) 366-3383; e-mail: demetra.collia@dot.gov. Office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., EST, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Confidential Close Call Reporting System.

*Type of Request:* Approval to continue to collect information on close calls.

*OMB Control Number:* 2139-0010.

*Affected Public:* Workers in the railroad industry.

*Number of Respondents:* 3,100

*Number of Responses:* 365 (annual)

*Total Annual Burden:* 365.00 hours (average estimate of 20 minutes to complete the C<sup>3</sup>RS report form and 30-40 minutes to participate in a brief interview.)

*Data Confidentiality Provisions:* The confidentiality of Close Call data is protected under the BTS confidentiality statute (49 U.S.C. Sec. 6307) and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA) of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-347, Title V). In

accordance with these confidentiality statutes, only statistical and non-identifying data will be made publicly available through reports. BTS will not release to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) or any other public or private entity any information that might reveal the identity of individuals or organizations mentioned in close call reports without explicit consent of the respondent. Accordingly, only statistical and non-sensitive information will be made available through publications and reports.

*Abstract:* Collecting data on the nation's transportation system is an important component of BTS's responsibility to the transportation community and is authorized in BTS statutory authority (49 USC 6307). FRA and BTS share a common interest in promoting rail safety based on better data. To that end, FRA's Office of Research and Development is sponsoring the Confidential Close Call Reporting System (C<sup>3</sup>RS) Demonstration Project to investigate the effectiveness of such system in improving rail safety.

A close call represents a situation in which an ongoing sequence of events was stopped from developing further, preventing the occurrence of potentially serious safety-related consequences. This might include the following: (1) events that happen frequently, but have low safety consequences; (2) events that happen infrequently but have the potential for high consequences (e.g., a train in dark territory proceeds beyond its authority); (3) events that are below the FRA reporting threshold (e.g., an event that causes a minor injury); and (4) events that are reportable to FRA but have the potential for a far greater accident than the one reported (e.g., a slow speed collision with minor damage to the equipment and no injuries.)

Employees involved in a close call are asked to provide information about the reported event by filling out a C<sup>3</sup>RS report form (questionnaire) and participating in a brief interview, as needed. Respondents are asked to provide: (1) name and contact information; (2) time and

location of the close call event; (3) a short description of the event; (4) potential contributing factors to the event; and (5) any other information that might be useful in determining a root cause of such event. In addition, BTS is developing an analytical database containing the reported data and other pertinent information to determine root causes of frequently reported close calls. The database is a valuable tool to railroad carriers and the FRA in their effort to identify safety issues and provide corrective measures before an accident occurs. Also, it provides rail safety researchers with valuable information regarding precursors to safety risks in rail operations and contributes to research and development of intervention programs aimed at preventing occupational accidents and fatalities.

The C<sup>3</sup>RS demonstration project offers a voluntary, cooperative, non-punitive environment to communicate safety concerns. Through the analysis of close calls the FRA and the railroad community receive information about factors that may contribute to unsafe events and the error recovery mechanisms that prevented an adverse consequence from occurring. Such information is used to develop new training programs, identify root causes of potentially adverse events, assess risk, and allocate resources to address those risks more efficiently.

It is estimated that close call reporting will take no more than one (1) hour (average estimate of 20 minutes to complete the C<sup>3</sup>RS report form and 20-30 minutes to participate in an brief interview) for a maximum total burden of 365.00 hours (365 reports\*60 minutes/60 = 365.00 hours). Reports are submitted when there is a qualifying event (i.e., when an employee experiences a close call or witnesses an unsafe situation) during their work shift. The frequency of such event is estimated to be approximately one per calendar day.

**ADDRESSES:** The agency seeks public comments on its proposed information collection. Comments should address whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Send comments to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725-17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, DC 20503, Attention: BTS Desk Officer.

Issued on: \_\_\_\_July 18, 2013\_\_\_\_\_

**Patricia Hu**, Director,  
Bureau of Transportation Statistics,  
Research and Innovative Technology Administration

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