

between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped postcard/envelope.

Interested parties are invited to send comments regarding any aspect of this information collection, including, but not limited to: (1) the necessity and utility of the information collection for the proper performance of the functions of the FHWA; (2) the accuracy of the estimated burden; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the collected information; and (4) ways to minimize the collection burden without reducing the quality of the collected information. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB renewal of this information collection.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Mohan Pillay, Office of Engineering, (202) 366-4655, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., E.T., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Emergency Relief Funding Applications.

*OMB Number:* 2125-0525.

*Background:* 23 U.S.C. 125 requires States to submit an application for emergency relief (ER) funds to the Federal Highway Administration. The ER funds are established for the repair or reconstruction of Federal-aid highways and Federal roads which are found to have suffered serious damage by natural disasters over a wide area or serious damage from catastrophic failures. The information is needed for the FHWA to fulfill its statutory obligations regarding funding determinations on emergency work to repair highway facilities. The requirements covering the FHWA ER program are contained in 23 CFR part 668.

*Respondents:* State Highway Agencies.

*Estimated Annual Burden on Respondents:* The amount of time required depends on the nature of the event, the extent of damage, among other things, and varies widely among applications by the same State and among States. On the average, it is estimated to require approximately 150 hours of professional staff time (engineering) plus 50 hours of secretarial staff time (typing and editing) for a total of 200 hours per application. The estimated average annual burden

for all respondents per year would be 7,200 hours (i.e., 36 applications times 200 hours per application).

**Authority:** 23 U.S.C. 125; 23 CFR 668.

Issued on: November 18, 1997.

**Diana Zeidel,**

*Deputy Associate Administrator for Administration.*

[FR Doc. 97-31173 Filed 11-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement; Henderson and Warren Counties, Illinois

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the construction of U.S. Route 34 as a four-lane highway. The proposed project will extend from east of the Village of Gulfport in Henderson County, Illinois to the vicinity of Monmouth in Warren County, Illinois.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Dennis Johnson, Environmental Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 3250 Executive Park Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703, Phone: (217) 492-4600

Dale E. Risinger, District Engineer, Illinois Department of Transportation, 401 Main Street, Peoria, Illinois 61602-1111, Phone: (309) 671-3333.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The proposed action is the construction of a four-lane divided highway in Henderson and Warren Counties, Illinois which will be approximately 47 km (29 miles) in length. The project will begin just east of Gulfport, Illinois extending east through a corridor in the vicinity of U.S. Route 34, ending east of Monmouth, Illinois. The proposed project may bypass communities within its limits.

The proposed action will enhance traffic access, improve traffic circulation, provide safer and more efficient access to the urban area, provide a divided highway design for high operating speeds and continuity from the Illinois/Iowa border to I-74 in Galesburg, Illinois. Primary environmental resources which may be impacted are local property tax income, agricultural land and wetlands. Alternatives under consideration include: (1) Taking no action or (2)

improvement of the existing two-lane roadway to a four-lane facility between Gulfport and U.S. Route 67 including improvement of the existing northwest bypass around Monmouth. Several proposed alignment alternatives will be evaluated.

The scoping process undertaken as part of this proposed project will include distribution of a scoping information packet, coordination with appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and review sessions as needed. A formal scoping information packet may be obtained from one to the contact persons listed above.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, a comprehensive public involvement program will be undertaken. A public meeting concerning the proposed action will be held in the study area prior to the public hearing. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meeting and hearing. The Draft EIS will be available for public agency review and comment and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA or Illinois Department of Transportation contact persons.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205 Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernment consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: November 14, 1997.

**Dennis Johnson,**

*Environmental Engineer, Springfield.*

[FR Doc. 97-31291 Filed 11-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

[FHWA Docket No. FHWA-97-2320; FHWA-96-46]

#### Achieving Interoperability in Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) With Dedicated Short Range Communications (DSRC)

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Supplemental notice; extension of comment period.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA published a notice in the **Federal Register** on January 6, 1997 (62 FR 791), in which the agency requested comments on three items of concern relating to the

implementation of dedicated short range communication (DSRC) systems specified in the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) National Architecture. These issues are paraphrased as follows:

(1) Should the FHWA require that DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funding meet draft standard specifications?

(2) Should the FHWA require that DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funding meet an escalating interoperability formula (e.g., start with national interoperability of all commercial vehicle operations (CVO) applications and gradually transition stepwise over time to national interoperability of all federally-funded DSRC applications)?

(3) Should a single DSRC standard be developed for all applications in ITS projects with Federal-aid highway funding?

The comment period for this notice was scheduled to close on February 1, 1997. The FHWA solicits further public comment on this issue; therefore, it is extending the comment period until January 27, 1998.

**DATES:** Comments must be received no later than January 27, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** All signed, written comments should refer to the docket number that appears at the top of this document and must be submitted to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For technical and programmatic questions contact: Mr. Michael P. Onder, ITS Joint Program Office, (202) 366-2639. For legal questions contact: Ms. Beverly M. Russell, Office of the Chief Counsel, (202) 366-1355. Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Background**

The ITS program of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) was established by the Congress in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), Pub. L. 102-240, 105 Stat. 1914. In section

6053(b) of the ISTEA, the Congress directed the USDOT to develop and implement standards and protocols to promote widespread use and evaluation of ITS technology as a component of the nation's surface transportation systems. A precursor to the development of standards has been the formation of a National ITS Architecture. The architecture describes how system components should work and interact, and includes recommendations for which kinds of communication system media are used for data transmission among the various components.

The USDOT began an intensive National ITS Architecture development program in December 1994, and concluded with an architecture that supports 30 ITS user services in July 1996. The National ITS Architecture envisions a transportation system in which DSRC is the favored method of wireless communications between vehicles and roadside subsystems for CVO, for Electronic Toll and Traffic Management (ETTM), and for several other important, but less prevalent, ITS applications. In ITS reauthorization legislation, for fiscal years 1998 or 1999, it is expected that the USDOT will be directed to ensure conformance with the National ITS Architecture and its implementing standards for ITS deployment projects using Federal-aid highway funds, thus ensuring the highest effectiveness and benefits for the funds expended.

##### **The Vehicle/Roadside Air Interface Problem**

Currently, interoperability does not exist between the DSRC equipment of different manufacturers. The DSRC standards governing the wireless communication between the transponder and reader, and the message sets in this wireless air interface exchange that are required for interoperability, are not yet applied to ITS project deployment.

Interoperability, in this case, is the ability of any given roadside reader or interrogation device to meaningfully query, send or receive, and process data from any given transponder mounted in a vehicle, regardless of which manufacturer produced either the reader or transponder. In order for wireless communication between vehicles and roadside—a fundamental enabling technology for ITS—to take place successfully, DSRC standards must be established at levels one and two of the International Standards Organization's Open Systems Interconnect (OSI) reference model, which deal with the "air interface" and the physical properties of the system. Furthermore,

for the DSRC applications to be a viable alternative for commercial fleets, it is essential that interoperability exist on a nationwide basis.

Over the past several years, the DSRC industry has been unable to agree upon a viable path for DSRC standardization. If the FHWA continues to allow Federal-aid highway funds to be invested in noncompatible systems, the magnitude of the problem will continue to escalate. Unless the DSRC industry can identify a solution to the remaining areas of non-interoperability soon, the FHWA will be forced to seek a process to develop and apply a standard as an interoperability solution to support long term deployment of DSRC using Federal-aid highway funds, and therein halt the proliferation of non-interoperable DSRC systems.

##### **Discussion of Comments**

A total of 21 comments were received in response to the initial notice soliciting comments on January 6, 1997. These comments represent the opinions of 29 entities. The comments received in response to each question are described immediately after a restatement of each question. The first question is subdivided into three parts for clear delineation of the salient aspects of the responses. The remaining two questions are briefly stated with their respective responses from the public.

##### **Questions and Responses**

1(a). Should the FHWA require that the DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funds meet draft standard specification, such as that of the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) proposed Draft No. 6 DSRC standard and the Committee for European Normalization (CEN) draft documents N473, N474, and N505, prior to their formal adoption as industry standards in an effort to reduce the proliferation of non-interoperable systems?

The responses were evenly divided on the question of whether Federal-aid funds should be tied to conformance with draft standards.

Comments from manufacturers were divided. Those manufacturers with products that meet, or are close to meeting, the ASTM draft DSRC standards were in favor of using a draft standard rather than a fully adopted national standard. The majority of the manufacturers, and some of the public and user agencies, stated that the CEN pre-standards are not suitable for North America. It was suggested that current work on the ASTM standard covering North American use of the 902 and 928 megahertz (MHZ) band for the DSRC

capability should be completed and, then, a long-term transition to the 5.8 gigahertz (GHz) band should be developed.

A majority of the commenters from the public and user agencies rejected use of the ASTM draft DSRC standards. They stated that the existing ASTM draft DSRC standards are not interoperable and would not ensure interoperability.

A few system integrators commented that requiring conformance with the ASTM draft DSRC standards would force all manufacturers to support preparation of the final standard, thus accelerating the effort to establish and publish the national standards.

1(b). Should the FHWA include message set requirement, such as, the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks Dedicated Short Range Communications Interface Requirements of April 2, 1996 (The Johns Hopkins University-Applied Physics Lab)?

A majority of commenters agreed that message set requirements are needed in the DSRC standards.

Manufacturers commented that message set requirements should be part of the standard, but that they would rather work with a fully defined and adopted DSRC standard.

Comments from the public and user agencies varied depending on the particular DSRC application in use; however, a majority stated that message set requirements should be incorporated into the DSRC standard to the extent practicable.

The system integrators believed that including message set requirements as a portion of the DSRC standard is necessary and would help force commitment to reach an agreement on the DSRC standard.

1(c). Should compliance with specific draft DSRC standards be required for CVO application only; for both CVO and ETMM application; or for CVO, ETMM, and additional applications?

A slight majority of commenters favored requiring compliance with the ASTM draft DSRC standard for application to CVO and ETMM.

Comments from manufacturers were divided on adopting an ASTM draft DSRC standard. One half of this group stated that the availability of Federal-aid highway funds should be tied only to a fully defined and endorsed DSRC standard; while the other half supported the adoption of a specific ASTM draft standard. There was a divergence of views on the extent of applicability of a DSRC standard. Some stated that users of simple applications should not have to pay for the needs of complex

applications. Others supported a single DSRC standard for all applications. Another group would adopt a single DSRC standard applicable to both CVO and ETMM applications.

Public and user agency responses were slightly varied, with all supporting application of a DSRC standard to CVO. A majority favored application of the DSRC standard to both CVO and ETMM. A few commenters favored a single DSRC standard for all DSRC applications.

Comments from the system integrators supported a widely applicable DSRC standard. This group supported immediate establishment of rules for use of the ASTM draft DSRC standard as a prerequisite for Federal-aid highway funding. According to the system integrators, even a draft DSRC standard could be used as a mechanism to move all parties to agreement on the final endorsed DSRC standard.

2. Should the FHWA require that DSRC systems purchased with Federal-aid highway funds meet an escalating interoperability formula? An example would be that, initially, all CVO applications must be nationally interoperable; later, all new (after some specified later date) ETMM systems and system upgrades must be interoperable with CVO applications; and, finally, all other new (after another specified even later date) and upgrading DSRC applications must be interoperable with CVO applications.

The FHWA believes that nationwide interoperability is critical for the efficient operation of vehicles using DSRC equipment crossing the nation, especially commercial vehicles, and, thus, requires a national focus. The ETMM programs, on the other hand, and possibly other DSRC applications are more focused on regional travel, with the exception of commercial carriers. Thus, it may not be practical to require all users of DSRC equipment to adhere immediately to a national DSRC standard. Instead, a transition to national interoperability may be the best approach.

A significant majority (60 percent) of all commenters favored use of a DSRC standard with an escalating interoperability formula as a prerequisite for use of Federal-aid highway funds.

A large majority of the DSRC equipment manufacturers and the DSRC system integrators responded favorably to the use of an escalating interoperability formula.

Comments from public and user agencies were divided on support for application of the escalating interoperability formulas as a

prerequisite for use of Federal-aid highway funds. The public and user agencies strongly supported continued use of existing equipment, including both transponders and readers, when a DSRC standard is established.

3. Should a single DSRC standard be developed for all DSRC applications, or should separate standards be developed with an assumption that trucks and buses, and perhaps other users, would likely require separate technology to perform those functions?

The FHWA recognizes that the CVO and ETMM applications, as well as other DSRC applications, have different requirements that have also shaped the design and operation of the DSRC equipment. While it may be desirable to have a single DSRC standard, it may not be practical. A possible alternative measure would be to have a single DSRC standard with standard fields, such as, vehicle identifier and message set identifier, but with different message sets for each application.

A majority (64 percent) of all non-Federal respondents favored use of a single DSRC standard for all applications as a prerequisite for use of Federal-aid funds.

The DSRC equipment manufacturers and the DSRC system integrators unanimously favored development and endorsement of an appropriately designed single DSRC standard, and its use for all ITS applications of DSRC, as a prerequisite for use of Federal-aid highway funds.

Comments from the public and user agencies were more divided on their responses for and against a single DSRC standard. Some of the agencies seemed to favor a single DSRC standard with multiple applications under its umbrella, which would provide interoperability, but possibly with different optional features (such as, different message sets) for the different applications. This is differentiated from the scenario implied by those questions asked in the January 6 notice; namely, a single DSRC standard with all of its requirements applicable to all DSRC applications.

## Conclusions

The USDOT has a strong desire to facilitate development and acceptance of standards that best serve the industry and the users of ITS technology. The USDOT is relying on the DSRC industry and users of ITS technology to come to agreement on the national DSRC standards. The FHWA has demonstrated its willingness to assist in this process by funding ASTM, a standards development organization, for this purpose. Also, the FHWA has been

participating in all discussions sponsored by the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America) that have been taking place between DSRC users and manufacturers. The FHWA understands that significant progress has been made toward agreement on a broad DSRC standard in the ASTM Draft No. 7 DSRC standard, prepared with industry and user participation. It is clear that the DSRC industry and users have been striving to make progress on the national DSRC standards—many work on their own time and at their own expense. The USDOT is sincerely appreciative for this cooperative effort, and will continue to encourage the DSRC industry to do its part. The need for national interoperability for CVO applications is becoming more critical. Also, the total national investment in non-interoperable ETTM equipment continues to grow rapidly. The USDOT would prefer that the DSRC industry and users set the necessary DSRC standards through a consensus building process among the DSRC vendor and user communities, which the USDOT is sponsoring through ITS America. It is imperative that the DSRC standards be ready for ballot by the end of 1997. If the ballottable standard is not available by that time, for publication by June 1998, of the endorsed DSRC standards, a meeting will be held under the ITS America auspices between the USDOT, the DSRC users, and the manufacturers to determine the extent of the delay. If a significant impasse to progress remains at the conclusion of that meeting, the USDOT will initiate a rulemaking action to establish the necessary standards to allow interoperability between DSRC applications.

(Sec. 6053(b), Pub. L. 102-240, 105 Stat. 1914; 23 U.S.C. 307 note; 49 CFR 1.48)

Issued on: November 19, 1997.

**Kenneth R. Wykle,**

*Federal Highway Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 97-31243 Filed 11-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

[FHWA Docket No. FHWA-97-2907]

#### Outdoor Advertising Control

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

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

**SUMMARY:** The Nevada Department of Transportation (NVDOT) proposes to

amend the Highway Beautification Federal/State Agreement dated January 21, 1972, between the United States of America represented by the Secretary of Transportation and the State of Nevada.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before December 29, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written, signed comments to FHWA Docket FHWA-97-2907, the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Docket Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. All comments received will be available for examination at the above address between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Those desiring notification of receipt of comments must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope/postcard. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Robert A. Johnson, Chief, Program Services Division, Office of Real Estate Services, HRE-20, (202) 366-2020; or Mr. Robert Black, Office of Chief Counsel, HCC-31, (202) 366-1359, Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 (HBA), codified at 23 U.S.C. § 131, requires States to provide effective control of outdoor advertising in the areas adjacent to both the Interstate System and Federal-aid primary system. States must provide effective control as a condition of receiving their full apportionment of Federal-aid Highway Funds. Effective control of outdoor advertising includes prohibiting the erection of new advertising signs except for certain categories of signs listed at § 131(c).

One of these sign categories, "off premise" signs, may be allowed by a State in zoned or unzoned commercial or industrial areas. Signs in such areas must conform to the requirements of an agreement between the State and the Federal Government which establishes size, lighting, and spacing criteria consistent with customary use. The agreement between Nevada and the FHWA was executed January 21, 1972.

The 1972 agreement states that the State of Nevada may permit signs to be erected no closer than 500 feet from an intersection outside "incorporated villages and cities." The amendment to the agreement, the exact language of which is set forth below, would use the term "urbanized area boundaries" as defined by 23 U.S.C. § 101(a) in place of "incorporated villages and cities."

In April 1980 the FHWA adopted a procedure to be followed if a State

requested a change in the Federal/State agreement. A State must first submit its proposed change, along with the reasons for the change and the effects of such change, to the FHWA Division Office. The Division, Region, and headquarters offices all review and comment on the proposal. If the concept is approved, the State must then hold public hearings on the proposed change to receive comments from the public. If the State then wishes to amend the agreement, it must submit: (1) the justification for the change; (2) the record of the hearings; and (3) an assessment of the impact. These are summarized and published in the **Federal Register** for comments. Comments on the proposed amended agreement will then be evaluated by the FHWA. The FHWA will then decide if the agreement should be amended as proposed and will publish its decision in the **Federal Register**. An amended agreement will then be sent to the State for signature.

Nevada has completed the above procedure up to the point of publishing in the **Federal Register**. No negative comments were received in response to the State's public hearings on this proposed change, and several supportive comments were received. Nevada's formal request provides justification for the proposed revision to the 1972 Federal/State Agreement. The primary issue is that the term "urbanized area boundaries" would be more consistent with the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 750, Subpart G) which speaks primarily of urban areas, rather than incorporated cities, towns, or villages. The change in the agreement is aimed primarily at effective control of billboards in Clark County (Las Vegas), Nevada, where a vast part of the metropolitan area is outside the incorporated city limits of Las Vegas. The State of Nevada believes that this change in the agreement could allow between 20 and 24 new billboard sites primarily in the Las Vegas area. The State maintains that this would result in minimal aesthetic impact because the urban areas are generally developed and contain numerous on-premise signs.

#### The Proposed Change

The Federal/State Agreement "For Carrying Out the National Policy Relative to Control of Outdoor Advertising in Areas Adjacent to the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and the Federal-Aid Primary System" made and entered on January 21, 1972, between the United States of America represented by the Secretary of Transportation acting by and through the Federal Highway