MC-F–20939, Coach and North Central seek control of Central Cab [5] and Mountaineer.[6] The acquisitions of control will be accomplished through the acquisition of all of the stock of each carrier. According to applicants, the stock is currently held in independent voting trusts to avoid any unlawful control pending disposition of this proceeding.

Coach submits that there will be no transfer of any federal or state operating authorities held by any of the carriers to be acquired. Following the consummation of the control transactions, each of these carriers will continue operating in the same manner as before and, according to Coach, granting the applications will not reduce competitive options available to the traveling public. Coach asserts that the carriers to be acquired do not compete to any meaningful degree with one another, are relatively small, and each faces substantial competition from other bus companies and transportation modes.

Coach also submits that granting the application will produce substantial benefits, including interest cost savings from the restructuring of debt and reduced operating costs from Coach's enhanced volume purchasing power. Specifically, Coach claims that each carrier to be acquired will benefit from the lower insurance premiums negotiated by Coach and from volume discounts for equipment and fuel. Applicants indicate that Coach or the relevant subsidiary will provide each of the carriers to be acquired with centralized legal and accounting functions and coordinated purchasing services. In addition, applicants state that vehicle sharing arrangements will be facilitated to ensure maximum use and efficient operation of equipment and that coordinated driver training services will be provided. Applicants also state that the proposed transactions will benefit the employees of each of the carriers to be acquired and that all collective bargaining agreements will be honored by Coach and the subsidiaries.

Coach plans to acquire control of additional motor passenger carriers in the coming months. It asserts that the financial benefits and operating efficiencies will be enhanced further by these subsequent transactions. Over the long term, Coach states that it will provide centralized marketing and reservation services for the bus firms that it controls, thereby enhancing the benefits resulting from these control transactions.

Applicants certify that: (1) the jurisdictional threshold has been met with respect to the transactions that are the subject of the applications; [7] (2) none of the carriers to be acquired holds an unsatisfactory safety rating from the U.S. Department of Transportation; [8] (3) each of the carriers to be acquired has sufficient liability insurance; (4) none of the carriers to be acquired is domiciled in Mexico or owned or controlled by persons of that country; and (5) approval of the transactions will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources. Additional information may be obtained from the applicants' representatives.

Under 49 U.S.C. 14303(b), we must approve and authorize a transaction we find consistent with the public interest, taking into consideration at least: (1) the effect of the transaction on the adequacy of transportation to the public; (2) the total fixed charges that result; and (3) the interest of affected carrier employees.

On the basis of the applications, we find that the proposed acquisitions of control are consistent with the public interest and should be authorized. If any opposing comments are timely filed, this finding will be deemed vacated and, unless a final decision can be made on the record as developed, a procedural schedule will be adopted to reconsider the applications.[9] If no opposing comments are filed by the expiration of the comment period, this decision will take effect automatically and will be the final Board action.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

This decision will not significantly affect either the quality of the human environment or the conservation of energy resources.

It Is Ordered

1. The proposed acquisitions of control are approved and authorized, subject to the filing of opposing comments.
2. If timely opposing comments are filed, the findings made in this decision will be deemed as having been vacated.
3. This decision will be effective on January 4, 1999, unless timely opposing comments are filed.
4. A copy of this notice will be served on: (1) the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Motor Carriers-HIA 30, 400 Virginia Avenue, SW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20024; and (2) the U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division, 10th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20530.

Decided: November 12, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–31093 Filed 11–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

[5] Central Cab is a Pennsylvania corporation. It holds federally issued operating authority in Docket No. MC–133058, which authorizes it to provide regular-route common carrier charter and special operations between points in the United States (except Hawaii). It also holds authority issued by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, the Public Service Commission of West Virginia, and the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to conduct intrastate operations. It operates approximately 34 motorcoaches, 11 school buses, and 9 vans; employs 96 persons; and earned gross annual revenues in fiscal year 1997 of approximately $4.7 million. Prior to the transfer of its stock into a voting trust, it was owned by John L. McNelly.

[6] Mountaineer is a Pennsylvania corporation. It holds federally issued operating authority in Docket No. MC–229627, which authorizes it to provide charter and special operations between points in the United States (except Alaska and Hawaii). It also holds authority issued by the Public Utilities Commission of West Virginia to conduct intrastate operations. It operates 6 motorcoaches and 2 vans; employs 28 persons; and earned gross annual revenues in fiscal year 1997 of approximately $1.1 million. Prior to the transfer of its stock into a voting trust, it was owned by John L. McNelly.

[7] *See* 49 CFR 1182.2(a)(5).

[8] Bonanza and Central Cab each hold a satisfactory rating; Mountaineer has not been rated.

[9] Under revised 49 CFR 1182.6(c), a procedural schedule will not be issued if we are able to dispose of opposition to the application on the basis of comments and the reply.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33678]

Emons Transportation Group, Inc., and Emons Railroad Group, Inc.—Continuance in Control Exemption—St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (Quebec) Inc.

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 11323–25 the continuance in control by Emons Transportation Group, Inc., and Emons Railroad Group, Inc., of St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (Quebec) Inc. upon that entity's becoming a Class III rail common carrier.

DATES: The exemption will be effective November 30, 1998. Petitions for stay must be filed by November 25, 1998, and petitions for reconsideration must be filed by December 21, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send an original and 10 copies of all pleadings referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33678 to: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the

Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, send one copy of pleadings to petitioners' representative: Kevin M. Sheys, Oppenheimer Wolff Donnelly & Bayh LLP, 1350 Eye Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph H. Dettmar (202) 565–1600. [TDD for the hearing impaired (202) 565–1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, call, or pick up in person from: DC News & Data, Inc., 1925 K Street, NW, Suite 210, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: (202) 289–4357. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565–1695.] Board decisions and notices are available on our website at WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.

Decided: November 13, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–31092 Filed 11–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33610]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company—Lease and Operation Exemption—Union Pacific Railroad Company

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts from the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 11323–25 the lease and operation by Norfolk Southern Railway Company, successor by merger to Norfolk and Western Railway Company, of approximately 4.7 miles of Union Pacific Railroad Company's line between Monterey Lead Milepost 4.4 at Monterey Mine No. 1, near Carlinville, IL, and Monterey Lead Milepost 0.0 at Monterey Junction, IL, and a leg of the wye track and related trackage between mileposts 104.5 and 104.8 at Monterey Junction,[1] subject to standard labor protective conditions.

[1] On September 9, 1998, NSR simultaneously filed a petition for exemption wherein it proposed to purchase from Union Pacific Railroad Company and to operate approximately 15.3 miles of rail line between milepost 104.8 at Monterey Junction (including the southwest leg of the wye track at Monterey Junction, which is approximately between milepost 104.5 and milepost 104.8) and milepost 119.8 at DeCamp, IL, plus certain yard tracks at Madison, IL. That petition was granted in *Norfolk Southern Railway Company, Successor by Merger to Norfolk and Western Railway Company—Purchase—Union Pacific Railroad Company,* STB Finance Docket No. 33609 (STB served Oct. 29, 1998).

DATES: The exemption will be effective on December 16, 1998. Petitions to stay must be filed by December 2, 1998. Petitions to reopen must be filed by December 7, 1998.

ADDRESSES: An original and 10 copies of all pleadings referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33610 must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423–0001; in addition, a copy of all pleadings must be served on petitioner's representative: James R. Paschall, Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, VA 23510–2191.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Joseph H. Dettmar, (202) 565–1600. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 565–1695.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, call or pick up in person from: DC NEWS & DATA, INC., 1925 K Street, NW, Suite 210, Washington DC 20006. Telephone: (202) 289–4357. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 565–1695.]

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

Decided: November 12, 1998.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan and Vice Chairman Owen.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98–30984 Filed 11–19–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P