

ATLANTIC NORTHEAST RAILS & PORTS

Helping to move rail and port traffic through New England, the Maritimes, & eastern Québec.
A weekly trade newsletter.

operating railroads + ports, intermodal facilities, and government environment

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Issue 06#02A 14 February 2006

*Article unchanged from e-bulletin.

REGIONAL ISSUES

CSXT: Ethanol coming by barge and rail.*

Atlantica: MDOT will interview 5 consultants.

MMA: Has doublestack route Halifax-Montreal.*

Rail contractors: Profiles of three in Canada.*

CONNECTICUT

[No report.]

MAINE

Rail service: Public Advocate releases results.

Legislature: Stop GRS idling in Oakland?

SLR: Morse Brothers sold.* Update on Richmond

PQ yard, trackage in Auburn, and Groveton

service.* Lewiston Auburn Railroad wants new line to intermodal terminal.*

Portland: Irving buys Motiva tanks.*

MASSACHUSETTS

GRS: Ford moves from Ayer to Framingham.*

Auto terminals: Overview of New England.*

GU: Even farther from a sale.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Commuter: ELF files action against I-93.*

Wilton Scenic: Founder dies.*

RHODE ISLAND

Commuter: Extension south of Providence.

Pawtucket hires VHB to study service, use of PW yard.*

VERMONT

NECR: Irving buys J&D oil terminal.*

MARITIMES/QUÉBEC

WHRC: Fundy adding siding for heavy rail

equipment.*

Halifax: Halterm lands Maersk.* Role as hub port.*

RAIL SHIPPERS/RECEIVERS

A cross-reference to companies mentioned here.

PEOPLE, POSITIONS, EVENTS

Peter Touesnard, Charlie Miller, Geoffrey Nickerson.

TRAQ Railway Expo + Symposium in Sherbrooke.

New England Railroad Expo in Worcester.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Maine rail service survey

First, my hat is off to the workers at the Maine's Office of Public Advocate, for completing and making a public survey of rail service.

Second, the Office made a couple of minor corrections, so erase from your mind the mistake I had in the e-bulletin. MERR did NOT have a 'worst' ranking.

Finally, while Guilford does rank last in several categories, its worst showing occurs in the 'complaint' category, where Guilford ranks ten times worse than MMA [see table below]. Fixing that would be simple: respond to customer complaints the first time. But apparently GRS does not care. See the article about idling in Maine, or about Massachusetts communities in the previous issue.

- Chop Hardenbergh

Next issue: 28 February.

Common abbreviations: **BCLR** - Bay Colony RR, **BML** - Belfast & Moosehead Lake RR, **CBNS** - Cape Breton and Central Nova Scotia Ry, **CCCR** - Cape Cod Central RR, **CCRR** - Claremont Concord RR, **CFQ** - chemins de fer Québec System, **CMAQ** - congestion-mitigation or air quality (money from the US federal government for these purposes), **CN** - Canadian National Ry, **ConnDOT** - Connecticut Department of Transportation, **CPR** - Canadian Pacific Ry, **CSO** - Connecticut Southern RR, **CSRX** - Conway Scenic RR, **EOT** - Mass. Exec. Office of Transportation, **GRS** - Guilford Rail System (Maine Central RR, Portland Terminal RR, Boston & Maine, all leased by **ST** - Springfield Terminal Ry), **GTI** - parent to GRS, **GWI** - Genesee & Wyoming Inc, **FHWA** - Federal Highway Admin., **FRA** - Federal Rail Admin., **FRTC** - Fore River Transportation Co., **FTA** - Federal Transit Admin., **HRRC** - Housatonic RR, **MERR** - Maine Eastern RR, **MBCR** - Mass. Bay Commuter RR, **MBRX** - Milford-Bennington RR, **MBTA** - Mass. Bay Transportation Authority, **MCER** - Mass. Central RR, **MDOT** - Maine Department of Transportation, **MERR** - Maine Eastern RR, **MMA** - Montréal, Maine and Atlantic Ry, **MPO** - Metropolitan Planning Organization, **MTQ** - Québec Ministry of Transport, **NAUG** - Naugatuck RR, **NBDOT** - New Brunswick Department of Transportation, **NBSR** - New Brunswick Southern Ry, **NECR** - New England Central RR, **NEGS** - New England Southern RR, **NHCR** - New Hampshire Central RR, **NHDOT** - NH Department of Transportation, **NHN** - New Hampshire Northcoast RR, **NNEPRA** - Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, **NSDOT** - Nova Scotia Department of Transportation, **PVRR** - Pioneer Valley RR, **PW** - Providence & Worcester RR, **QCR** - Quebec Central Ry, **RIDOT** - Rhode Island Department of Transportation, **Seaview** - Seaview Transportation Company, **SLQ** - St. Lawrence & Atlantic Ry (Québec), **SLR** - St. Lawrence & Atlantic RR, **TIRR** - Turner's Island LLC, **TEU** - twenty-foot equivalent unit (measure of container traffic, equal to a 20x8x8 foot box), **VAOT** - Vermont Agency of Transportation, **VRS** - Vermont Rail System (Green Mt. RR Company) **GMRC** + Vermont Ry **VTR** + Clarendon & Pittsford RR **CLP** + Washington County RR **WACR**, **WHRC** - Windsor and Hantsport Ry.

REGIONAL ISSUES

CSXT: ETHANOL COMING

1 February. **TERMINALS IN NEW ENGLAND WILL TAKE ETHANOL BY THE END OF 2006**, said Brian Ward, who is handling the ethanol rail moves for CSXT. He explained that from the Midwest, CSXT rails ethanol east to a terminal in Albany NY operated by Cibro Petroleum. From there, the ethanol moves from Albany down river by barge predominantly to New York Harbor, but also to regional customers as far south as Philadelphia.

Terminals in New England, possibly in Providence and Boston, could accept barges from Albany by the end of 2006. In addition, CSXT may rail the ethanol into New England. Ward declined to provide the names of the customers with whom he is now working.

Tank trucks will dray the blended product to end users; they first load gasoline, then proceed to the ethanol tank to load that product last. {ANR&P discussion}

Federal requirement for ethanol

The 2005 National Energy Policy Act [a complete misnomer—*editor*] in section 1501 amended 42 USC 7545 to insert section (o) ‘Renewable Fuel Program’; renewable fuel includes ethanol and biodiesel. Section (o)(2)(B) of 42 USC 7545 now requires the volume of renewable fuel in 2006 to reach 4.0 billion gallons, and by 2012 7.5 billion gallons. {Library of Congress website}

To meet the burgeoning requirement, gasoline retailers are adding ethanol (which helps gasoline burn cleaner) to gasoline in varying amounts, although its use is not mandated in many areas. One of the companies using the Cibro facility, Pekin, Illinois-based Aventine Renewable Energy Inc., produces and markets 650 million to 700 million gallons of ethanol a year.

More about the Cibro Petroleum facility and rail

Cibro once operated a refinery on the Hudson. In 2005, it doubled the number of tanks it is using to store ethanol, to a total capacity of 314,000 barrels. The barges moving the ethanol down river have a head haul of gasoline from the refineries in New Jersey.

CSXT runs an ‘ethanol express’ from the Midwest to Albany every few days, with between 65 to 80 tank cars. It can do the round trip, including unloading, from the Midwest in about five days. {Eric Anderson in Albany *Times Union* 19.Aug.05}

ATLANTICA STUDY

13 February, Augusta. **MDOT WILL INTERVIEW ALL FIVE FIRMS WHICH PRESENTED PROPOSALS** to study the role of transportation in the Halifax-Buffalo area [see 05#12A]: Cambridge Systematics, Wilbur Smith Associates, Louis Berger, PB Consult (a subsidiary of Parsons Brinckerhoff), and Delcan (a global consulting firm).

Carl Croce, head of the department’s planning office, said all five proposals were “close” so the department will spend two days on interviews, 27 and 28 February. {ANR&P discussion}

MMA: DOUBLESTACK ROUTE

30 January, Bangor. **MMA CAN PROVIDE DOUBLE-STACK ROUTING FROM THE MARITIMES TO MONTREAL**, wrote Dick Rushmore, vice-president marketing, in a letter to the *Bangor Daily News*. In refuting the assertion (reported in the newspaper) by Tim Woodcock [see 05#09A] that only CN can provide double-stack service, Rushmore pointed out that the route from Halifax via Saint John through Maine to Montreal is also cleared for double-stack containers.

Noting that Woodcock is a staunch advocate for the East-West Highway, Rushmore added: ‘The east-west highway exists today on steel rails, and is capable of handling any conceivable amount of freight and intermodal traffic. Maine produces vastly more freight in forest and agricultural products than it receives. This fundamental imbalance will not be solved by an east-west highway, whether on rails, roads or otherwise.’ {30.Jan.05}

[Ben Coes, a director of special projects for MMA’s predecessor, famously remarked that “Maine already has an east-west highway. It’s called the Bangor & Aroostook Railroad.” *Editor*]

THREE RAIL CONTRACTORS

Track work in recent months has brought to my attention three rail contractors, all from Canada:

Scotia Rail Services

Headquartered in Sydney, Nova Scotia, this contractor provides new construction, maintenance, upgrading, removal, crossings, and traffic control systems as well as other work. Owner Tom Harpell said his company works “all over the Maritimes, from Sydney to northern New Brunswick.” In fact, he bid on some work for an excursion railway, ‘the Blueberry Coastal Railway’, in Machias Maine. He leases some of his heavy equipment, and trailers the rest to the job site. He hires local workers.

Starting the business in 1988, Harpell incorporated it in 1993 (the year Raitex bought the CBNS line from CN), after he fell into rail work as part of his private construction past. He did the work for Fundy Gypsum [see *Maritimes*], and has worked for WHRC, CBNS, and owners of private sidings. {*ANR&P* discussion 17.Jan.06}

Maritime Rail Maintenance

Headquartered in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, this contractor offers tie production, new construction, maintenance, upgrading, removal, crossings, inspections, and so forth. Owner Paul MacIntyre founded it in 1993, when CN sold the CBNS line; he had done rail maintenance for CN. The company now has its own fleet of maintenance and snow-fighting equipment.

MRM has done work for CN, CBNS, NBEC, SCR, and owners of private sidings such as National Gypsum, Sifto, Port of Halifax, Imperial Oil, LaFarge (Brookfield NS), Michelin, and Nova Scotia Power Inc. {fax from MRM}

Competition

MRM states that it stands by its customers through good times and bad: ‘we value their business and hope they will continue to call on us.’ It calls for support of local businesses, and find it frustrating that ‘companies from outside our area are brought in to do the work we do.’

Scotia’s Harpell said that for the most part, he and MRM compete for track work in the Maritimes.

Blackwood Railroad Materials

Headquartered in Mount Albert, Ontario [15 minutes past David Dunlap Observatory in Richmond Hill, where your editor used the telescope 1967-1969], this company concentrates on rail removals and abandonments, but also offers maintenance services.

It also builds specialized, innovative hi-rail equipment which can haul railcars and which has a grapple to lift ties and rails. In the Atlantic Northeast, Blackwood has worked for MMA, SLR, and is currently working on the Cape Main and the Watuppa Branch (operated by Bay Colony). Owner Jim Forsyth said he has a fully-qualified American crew for work in the United States. {company website and *ANR&P* discussion 23.Jan.06}

Other railroad contractors already described

This newsletter has already featured:

A.J.Belliveau RR Construction, Newington CT [see 98#16].

DeAngelis Railroad Contractors, Worcester, MA [see 04#05B].

Industrial Track Service Corporation, Stoneham, MA.

[See advertisements in summer 2004 issues.]

Maine Track Maintenance, South Portland, Maine [see 02#07A].

New England Rail Consortium

(only design and construction supervision) [see 99#22].

Northeast Railroad Construction, Woburn, MA [see 04#05A].

Railworks Track Services, North Jackson, Ohio [see 05#11A].

R.T.Ames & Company, New Sharon, Maine [see 03#03A].

W.J.Riegel, Selkirk, NY [see 04#08A].

MAINE

RAIL SERVICE IN MAINE

6 February, Augusta. *THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE ISSUED HIS FIRST REPORT, COVERING THE 3RD AND 4TH QUARTERS OF 2005*, as required by a Maine statute passed in 2005 [see 18 January 2006 issue]. For the third quarter, the Public Advocate's Office mailed out 112 surveys to rail shippers, and received 34 responses. In the fourth quarter, it mailed out 107, and received back 32. While the Report does not indicate how many shippers of each railroad responded, one can get a rough sense from the number of comments. The Office listed 42 comments in the 68 responses. Of those 20 comments came from Guilford shippers, 16 from MMA shippers, 8 SLR, and one MERR. [Does not add to 42 because of shippers using two railroads.]

The questions

The survey asked three questions in three areas.

1. Late placement/on-time placements.
2. Cars requested/cars delivered/cars rejected.
3. Number of complaints.
4. Other comments.

The results

In an attachment to the Report, Public Advocate Stephen Ward wrote:

A. Survey Highlights [rank category # correspond to table 1]

1) Guilford/Springfield Terminal ranks poorest of all railroads surveyed in five [of the eight categories calculated] for the last six months of calendar 2005 (3rd and 4th Quarters):

[#4] number of complaints by shippers about service problems

[#5] number of contacts from customers about service problems

[#6] the average number of days that placements were late

[#7] the number of empty cars rejected as unsuitable by shippers; and

[#8] the number of cars requested by shippers but never delivered

2) Guilford/Springfield terminal ranks best in one category in the last six months of calendar 2005 (3rd and 4th Quarters):

[#3] full cars actually picked up/delivered out of cars requested.

Table 1. Railroad Shippers Survey				
Ranking combined data from - 3rd & 4th Quarter 2005				
	MERR	MMA	SLR	GRS/ST
1. Late placements out of total placements	NA	23.1%	0.7%	12.4%
RANK		1	3	2
2. Empty cars delivered out of cars requested	NA	87.5%	108%	96.1%
RANK		1	3	2
3. Full cars actually picked up/delivered out of cars requested	NA	89.0%	107%	148%
RANK		1	2	3
4. Rank for number of complaints	X	2	3	1
5. Rank for service quality contacts	X	2	3	1
6. Rank for average days late by number of days	X	2	X	1
7. Rank for empties rejected	X	3	2	1
8. Rank for non-delivery of any car	NA	2	3	1
Average rank (4+5+6+7+8÷n)	NA	2.2	2.75	1

3) Montreal Maine and Atlantic ranks poorest of all railroads surveyed in three [of the eight] categories calculated for the last six months of calendar 2005 (3rd and 4th Quarters):

[#1] the percentage of late placements out of all cars delivered

[#2] the percentage of empty cars delivered out of cars requested.

[#3] the percentage of full cars actually picked up out of cars requested

4) St Lawrence & Atlantic ranks best in two [out of the eight categories measured] in the last six months of calendar 2005 (3rd and 4th Quarters):

[#1] late placements out of total placements.

[#2] empty cars delivered out of total cars requested

[SLR finished second in five other categories, and was not ranked in the last one. *Editor*]

B. Notes

1) The response rate for the 3rd Quarter survey was 30.3% out of 112 surveys mailed; the response rate for the 4th Quarter survey was 29% out of 107 surveys mailed. All surveys went to shippers located in the State of Maine who rely on one or more railroads doing business in Maine.

Railroad Shipper Survey - Combination of 3rd and 4th Quarter 2005				
Name of Railroad	MERR	MMA	SLR	GRS/ST
1. Late placements/on-time placements				
- no. of on-time placements (occurring on the date for which ordered), of inbound loads or cars released by shipper	12	2298	700	6,144
- no. of late placements	0	689	5	820
- total placements		2987	705	6,934
- % late placements		23.1%	0.7%	11.8%
-average no. of days late (total no. of late days divided by total late placements)	0	47	0	88.53
2. Cars requested/cars rejected by customers				
-no. of empty cars requested in quarter	12	3544	274	6,421
-no. of empty cars actually delivered	10	3102	295	6,172
% empties delivered		87.5%	107.7%	96.1%
-no. of empties rejected for any reason	0	2	13	121
-no. of full cars requested in quarter	12	3131	1943	2,079
-no. of full cars actually picked up or delivered	12	2787	2014	3,067
% full picked up or delivered		89.0%	103.7%	147.5%
-no. of times service was requested and not provided at all (as opposed to delayed)	2	12	3	169
3. No. of complaints				
-no. of individual complaints regarding service problems in Maine, other than a request for a switch or a car	0	38	6	315
-no. of contacts with personnel of a Maine railroad concerning service problems	0	56	9	430
ANR&P addition: customer relations		1.3%	0.3%	10.2%
# complaints/# full cars actually picked up or delivered.				

This table compiles the numerical data supplied by the 34 shippers who responded in October 2006 about their rail service in 3Q05 and the 32 shippers who responded in January 2006 about service in 4Q05. *Modified from Office of Public Advocate submission to Maine Legislature.*

2) Narrative comments submitted in both surveys primarily focused on two railroads: Guilford/Springfield Terminal (18 out of 39), and Montreal Maine and Atlantic (16 out of 39). Comments were both favorable and unfavorable. In the 4th Quarter, many comments focused on weather-related disruptions.

THE NARRATIVE COMMENTS

The Report itself contained this description:

In addition to the statistical information presented in Attachments I and II, the survey results also incorporated written comments about individual railroads. All individual comments have been redacted to remove information that could identify the business providing the comments in compliance with subsection 4 of Section 1711 and its requirement of anonymity for survey respondents.

The following is a brief compilation of noteworthy comments about individual railroads. We should emphasize that this survey effort has just begun and the initial responses of survey respondents may not fully capture public sentiment about the adequacy of service quality or comparative performance of freight railroads. It is equally true that, while the survey response rate at 30% has been robust, there conceivably are many shippers with strong opinions about service performance (positive or negative) who have yet to respond to a Public Advocate quarterly survey.

A selection [by the Public Advocate] of comments on MMA

- I've had excellent co-operation with this RR since I took over as manager of _____ 1 ½ years ago.
 - Not many problems during this 3-month period. Generally problems occur November-March.
 - We have no issues, good communication with MMA at the _____ and on the ground. Bob Thomas does a great job working with us to keep us informed and address issues. We hope to expand our use of their service.
 - No problems or complaints.
 - Had problems with bill of lading and proper billing terms.
 - MMA service fair to good. Has trouble with large, steady volumes. Poor winter engines and snow plowing ability.
 - They have been late getting cars to us at times and we have had to ship trucks [for] which the freight is high. MMA is very quick to charge demurrage but very slow at times on service which has caused us to use trucks which charge higher in freight thanks to the RR. But we have to pay it to keep our customers supplied. It cost us \$4,350 to ship 60 tons by truck which is 3 loads compared to \$1,900 by rail which hauls 78 to 90 tons of ____.
- In my opinion we shouldn't have to pay demurrage at all if the railroad can't deliver service to us.

- MMA is not prepared to deal with snow storms - NO service during week of December 26-31 due to storm!! MMA has many engine failures which prevent service.
- They place and we load. No late placements. No cars rejected. No complaints.
- No complaints.
- Getting cars from Canada is always a delay and paperwork takes 7 days sometimes.

MMA RESPONDS

Dick Rushmore, vice-president marketing, responded to the data and the comments:

'While we have had and will continue to have minor service problems, it is also important to note that unlike most of state, we experienced an unprecedented 40-inch snowfall in the northern part of our territory on December 26 and 27.

'We vigorously dispute the fourth quarter numbers that indicate shortages of empty cars and a substantial number of full cars not picked up or delivered. We have had no car shortages even approaching this magnitude for equipment furnished by [MMA].

'This distortion appears to be due to the experience of one customer that furnishes its own cars and is therefore in charge of its car supply; we cannot control or dictate this customer's loading and unloading of its own equipment. Accordingly, we view these numbers as grossly inaccurate and not reflective of our excellent car supply which we maintain at considerable cost and expense.

'While the overall survey indicated a

A selection [by the Public Advocate] of comments on SLR

- It's the CN Railroad we have issues with. We receive approximately 6 boxcars per year that arrive late. The bulk cars are fine.
- Has provided excellent service.
- Has been doing a great job this year.
- Intermodal equipment availability is a continuing issue.
- Does a great job and I am a big customer of theirs.
- Wintertime efficiency is the major issue.
- We only receive full cars and they come in on a timely manner in the summer, the winter is a different story.

A selection [by the Public Advocate] of comments on Guilford

- This service was very poor beginning early December through end of year holidays -- as far as inbound commodities we don't keep problem/issue documentation. Materials such as ____ and ____ are delivered to _____ from Portland. These moves are under the direct control of Guilford. All other commodities come from a variety of areas around the country. Over the course of the last several

months our inbound commodities service has worsened. We have reverted to spending quite a bit of time tracking commodities on a daily basis and have daily interaction with personnel from ST to coordinate efforts and prioritize needs. Problem began Thanksgiving holiday 2005 and has lasted through January 2006. We are finally getting back into what I hope is better service and consistent deliveries. The movement of commodities via the railroad efficiently and effectively is absolute critical to Maine's economic infrastructure. I am hopeful that industries may some day consider locating and expending in the State of Maine if rail service is improved.

- ST service: poor, cannot count on service. Moves seem to be unpredictable. Requested cars that come late.

- We could increase our _____ traffic from 200 carloads per year to 500 with improved service. Cars are hung up on the ST in Portland, Lowell, Deerfield. The equipment or personnel - hurting Maine economy.

- Do not track personnel problems with this RR because it would be daily effort and also do not track the complaints on switching since this is a daily concern/issue. Other problems include: 1/car delays in both directions: excessive dwell in ST yards; multiple derailments affecting company shipments; inconsistent service impacting facility operating efficiency; bad ordered repair delays; billing/routing errors.

- On no service/late service days we still had crews scheduled 23/7. We have lost customers with poor service. We have _____ locations in separate cities that are _____ served by GRS/ST. At location _____ rail service we requested _____ for the 3 month period (28 late placements of _____ requested). Rail service we requested _____ placements and 4 were late placements.

- We were off loading on average on 12 bulk railcars of _____ per week, plus one carload of _____ each week during our peak seasons. We relied heavily on GRS for timely service or just plain service for that matter, however; the problems and excuses were too great to track. I tried to track problems with their performance but I found I was wasting way too much of my time on phone calls and spreadsheets as their problems continued and were never addressed. On many occasions our production lines were nearly stopped because of a lack of materials to produce due to GRS's broken promises! There were way too many examples to cite. Our company made the decision to discontinue the use of railcars because of the issues and we have been transporting our _____ by _____ truck from our supplier in _____. We have been using this method of transport for the past _____ months or so and it has proven to be more reliable and a better fit for our needs. We do currently receive _____ of _____ every _____ weeks only because of logistics issues, and still the service is not reliable for this product. It is unfortunate that we have a nice rail spur entering our property with _____ service lines and _____ unloading stations for railcars that is going unused.

- Inconsistent service, unreliable service during this period.

- The advent of the _____ has impacted our location and setting of cars has been even more sporadic since that service began. During my time in transportation management we had countless meetings with senior representatives of ST to attempt to create a standard operating procedure and to this date none exists. To say the least, ST has cost our Companies uncountable hours of lost labor, production time, unsatisfied customers, and ultimately reduced our ability to do business. It is our understanding that the railroads serving the _____ area are regulated and protected by the Interstate Commerce Act and as such are also expected to deliver a reasonable delivery service. My sense of ST Co. is that their needs come 1st, 2nd and 3rd and the paying customer will be served later. I hope the data collection effort will motivate a quality improvement in rail service. Years of pleading has not worked.

- Due to inability to move or place cars, we have had to cancel plans to expand our business by rail in Maine.

- All service by GRS is good.

- _____ railcars had to be delivered into a warehouse, off loaded and trucked to destination. As far as inbound commodities, we don't have problems. Over the course of the last 2 months, inbound commodity service has been surprisingly good. Still keep higher inventory levels than we really need due to past service issues. If we go through the 2005/2006 winter with current service levels ... we'll probably consider easing back a bit on our inventory. Thanks for keeping this process going. Management at ST is aware of the survey and I believe it keeps the pressure on them. Movement of commodities via the RR efficiently and effectively is absolutely critical to Maine's economic infrastructure. Am hopeful that industries may someday consider locating or expanding in the State of Maine if rail service is improved.

- All is well.

- Transit times are good until they hit _____ yard. Then everything comes to a standstill. Same excuses are used, "no manpower, no equipment, no overtime allowed." Sr. management sit in Billerica, MA and tell you over the phone they are trying to improve. Until they put senior managers in So. Portland, ME they will never improve.

- These complaints all pertain to a group of cars shipped out. ST is not reading bill of lading properly when they say PREPAID - they bill anyways!

- Too many late placements to count on GRS/ST.

- Would utilize rail much more if switching and sets were prompt.

- _____ delays in both directions, excessive _____ in railroad yard; inconsistent service impacting mill efficiency; bad order repair delays; billing.

{text of report as submitted to Maine Legislature, Joint Standing Committees on Utilities and Energy and on Transportation

6.Feb.06}

MAINE - ANTI-IDLING BILL

24 January. **THE LEGISLATURE CONSIDERED REQUIRING GRS NOT TO IDLE LOCOMOTIVES OUTSIDE OF OAKLAND YARD.**

While the concept originated in Oakland, Senator Elizabeth H. Mitchell, a Vassalboro Democrat who represents Oakland, said that the idea of limiting locomotive idle times has caught on across the state.

At the public hearing on 24 January, Executive Vice-president David Fink told members of the Joint Committee on Transportation: “We don't violate the law. When a train runs for 12 hours, it doesn't matter where it is, we shut it off.”

Concept draft only

The legislative website as of 13 February lists only the concept of the bill: ‘This bill proposes to require Guilford Transportation Industries trains that run through the Town of Oakland to stop for a change of crew only at the rail yard, where train noise and diesel fumes are anticipated and where the noise, fumes and odor pollution will not harm the public, at times when stops will not disrupt residential neighbors' sleep.’

Purchase of heaters

Fink told the Committee that to prevent damage from freezing, the diesel engine in the locomotive must keep running at temperatures below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. GRS will purchase auxiliary heating units, which will use much less fuel than idling the prime mover, produced by Ecotrans Technologies of London, Ontario.

MORE ABOUT ECOTRANS

The company, located in London, Ontario, manufactures a system driven by a small diesel engine, an APU (auxiliary power unit) which will keep the vital components of a locomotive's prime mover warm, including the water and oil. Additionally, it is designed to charge the locomotive's batteries. It starts itself when the water temperature or battery voltage falls below a given point, and stops when the temperature or voltage rises above a given point. Similarly, it starts when locomotive battery power has fallen below a given point and stops when the batteries are charged.

Recently, Ecotrans systems have been installed on two Canadian locomotives in Ontario. They have saved \$8,700 each in the first two months of operation according to Stefan Nilsson, Ecotrans manager service & application engineering.

CSXT has purchased in excess of 1500 units and NS has purchased in excess of 300 units. In the Atlantic Northeast, SLR, GRS, and MBTA have purchased APUs.

According to officials at the company, the APUs generally pay for themselves within a year. {ANR&P discussion 10.Feb.06}

Guilford installed its first APU [see box] on a locomotive 20 January, Fink said. The cost and the length of time required to install the units will make the process of outfitting the entire fleet take a matter of years.

Lack of communication with Guilford

Introducing himself as “the man who started all this,” Oakland Town Manager Steven Dyer said his efforts came in response to many frustrated residents. When requests to railroad employees met with no result, he tried to contact GRS corporate offices with no satisfaction. Repeated phone calls and multiple letters went unanswered.

Members of the Joint Transportation Committee reported similar experiences. “The communications with your company are not good, and people are getting frustrated,” Auburn Democrat Sonya G. Sampson told Fink.

Fink replied that, as business has increased, so has the mass of freight, and therefore, pollution.

“But, do you have a policy, where if people call you ...” Sampson began.

“No. If folks call my phone, I answer,” Fink said. “But no, we do not have a policy (for dealing with complaints).” The phone number Fink gave after the meeting is (978) 663-1186.

Senator Bill Diamond (D, Bangor) asked why one person at the level of executive vice-president is saddled with the task of mitigating the complaints that Guilford chooses to acknowledge. Diamond wondered whether GRS wouldn't be better with a policy for dealing with complaints. {Joel Elliott in Central Maine *Morning Sentinel* 25.Jan.06}

Next step

The Transportation Committee was scheduled to consider LD1793 in its work session on 26 January, but put it off, according to one of the bill's co-sponsors, Marilyn Canavan (D, Waterville). {ANR&P discussion 30.Jan.06}

SLR: MORSE BROTHERS

8 February, Lewiston. *THE NEW OWNERS OF THIS MULCH BUSINESS ARE OPEN TO FURTHER USES OF RAIL*, according to one of them, Jim Hiltner. He explained that he and the other principals of Commercial Paving and Recycling Inc of Scarborough had seen an opportunity to expand to another industrial materials business. They closed the deal at the end of January with the then-owners of Morse Brothers, Ben and Erik Hawkins [see 05#06B].

Additional rail

Hiltner said his group has met with CN to discuss additional rail traffic, particularly for the oversized containers [see photo in 05#06B] which now move empty back to Quebec. “The rail access is a definite attraction.” Would some of Commercial Paving’s recycled materials move by rail? Possibly, said Hiltner, though at this point he has permits for the materials to move in the local market. {ANR&P discussion 8.Feb.06}

SLR - VARIOUS POINTS

1 February, Auburn. *AN UPDATE ON VARIOUS ISSUES CONCERNING THE RAILROAD* was provided by General Manager Ray Goss:

Intermodal yard in Richmond

Goss said he is supporting Dany Julien’s proposal to create an intermodal terminal in Richmond, to take advantage of the empty containers returning westward [see 06#01A]. Creating a new service, with the complexity of new lanes and container rates, takes some time.

Added trackage in Auburn

SLR’s engineering firm, HNTB, is preparing a proposed layout for the additional 9,000 feet of trackage, funding for which is provided by a federal earmark [see 05#01B]. Goss believes the trackage can fit in the SLR’s right of way, so it need not purchase neighboring parcels. The track should be done in 2006.

Groveton switcher

Following the shuttering of the Groveton Paperboard Company [see 18 January issue], SLR has dropped its switching of the area from five to three times a week. “We’re hoping to attract other business and go back to switching five days a week,” Goss said. {ANR&P discussion 7.Feb.06}

SLR: NEW INTERMODAL ACCESS

8 February, Lewiston. *THE LEWISTON AUBURN RAILROAD SEEKS FUNDING FOR AN ADDITIONAL LINE*, said Lucien Gosselin, clerk of the railroad, which is now operated by the SLR [see box]. This would use the alignment of the long-defunct Portland and Rumford Falls Railroad [see 05#06B], now owned in part by Morse Brothers and used as a road to the Intermodal Terminal. [The new line would run from the intermodal terminal, between the old Bayshore (now new Safe Handling) site to join the SLR main line. See map in 05#03B.]

The Lewiston Auburn Railroad (LARR) would build track from the SLR main line into the terminal, and to Morse Brothers as well. The new line would extend about 1500 feet into the Town of Poland, an extension not permitted by the existing railroad charter; hence LARR has asked the Legislature to amend the charter [see box].

Why the new line

Gosselin pointed out that SLR traffic has grown so much that trains must now park on the main line. For about eight years, LARR has sought the line. Even though the SLR this year will get an additional 9,000 feet of track [see above], Gosselin believes that growth in traffic will justify the new line. Intermodal traffic will use the existing LARR main as well as the new alignment.

“This is a good opportunity to work with the SLR and our industrial base to use the asset to continue economic growth in the Lewiston-Auburn area.”

Funding

LARR has sought funding for the new line, basically a federal earmark of about \$1 million. With the support of US Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, plus US Representative Mike Michaud, LARR nearly got the earmark passed two years ago. Gosselin is looking at possibly using Economic Development Administration money from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. “It’ll be two to four years before the project sees the light of day,” he predicts. {ANR&P

discussion 8.Feb.06}

HISTORY OF THE L-A RR & CHARTER AMENDMENT

A line between what is now Lewiston Junction and Lewiston was conceived by officials in Auburn and Lewiston as a way to provide direct passenger service to both cities. The Maine Legislature granted a charter in 1872, the two cities invested \$300,000, and the line became a reality. It was leased to the Grand Trunk Railway, predecessor to CN and then SLR.

A new charter

Gosselin said the railroad owners, in reviewing the 1872 charter, found it needed updating to permit the railroad to own rights-of-way outside the twin cities, and to borrow funds above the 1872 limit of \$250,000. The owners have requested the Legislature pass a bill, LD 1849 containing a new charter, which will provide three improvements:

- Permit borrowing for any amount. Gosselin said the lenders would determine, based on creditworthiness, how much to loan.
- Permit the railroad to own rights of way outside the twin cities.
- Give a seat on the board of directors to towns 'in which the corporation has rails or tracks.' {ANR&P discussion 9.Feb.06}

PORTLAND: IRVING BUYS TANKS

1 February, South Portland. **IRVING OIL PURCHASED MOTIVA'S SHARE OF AN OIL TERMINAL**; Motiva owned 55%, Citgo Petroleum Corporation owns the other 45%, of the terminal on the waterfront here. Irving had used other terminals, but this deal, for the terminal on Mechanic Street, marks the first ownership.

Mike Crosby, head of marketing for Irving, said: "Chances are if you fuel up your car in Bangor or Portsmouth, New Hampshire, you are buying gasoline that came through Portland Harbor. And, if you see a truck fueling a home in Augusta or Skowhegan, it is likely that fuel also came from Portland Harbor. The fact is South Portland is a strategic supply point for Maine and New Hampshire."

CITGO and Motiva

CITGO is owned by PDV America, Inc., an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Petr6leos de Venezuela, S.A., the national oil company of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Headquartered in Houston, Motiva Enterprises LLC is a refining and marketing joint venture owned by affiliates of Shell and Saudi Aramco.

Irving terminals

The company has wholesale operations in all six New England states, operating marine terminals in Revere Massachusetts, Searsport Maine, and Portsmouth NH. Irving's marine terminals are supplied by a modern fleet of double-hulled tankers including the *MT New England 2006*, the *MT Great Eastern 2005*, the *MT Acadian 2005*, the *MT Nor'easter 2005*, and the *MT Irving Canada 1981*. {Irving press release}

MASSACHUSETTS

GRS: FORD LEAVING AYER

9 February, Massachusetts. **FORD WILL MOVE ITS AUTO UNLOADING TERMINAL FROM AYER TO FRAMINGHAM ON CSXT**, according to four different sources, by mid-March. {ANR&P discussions with official at Ayer terminal, with union source, with GRS worker, and with another source close to North Billerica 7-9.Feb.06}

Asked for comment, Ford spokesperson Anne Marie Gattari said: "No final decision has been made at this time." {ANR&P discussion 7.Feb.06}

Traffic count

Sources close to the operation said that in the past, the operator of the terminal, GTI-related Aroostook and Bangor Resources (ABR) aimed to unload 50 auto racks per day. {e-mail to ANR&P 8.Feb.06} If unloading only occurred on weekdays, that translates to about 10,000 cars a year. Since CSXT crews and locomotives move the unit trains to Worcester, and GRS uses the locomotives to deliver the train to Ayer, GRS is probably earning roughly a switching fee per car of about \$450.

Multiplication shows that GRS will lose on the order of \$4.5 million, or roughly 4-5% of its annual revenue. Since ABR unloads roughly 12 vehicles per rack, that comes to 120,000 vehicles per year, and if ABR earned only \$10 per vehicle, ABR would lose revenue of \$1.2 million. *Editor*

Co-ownership of ABR and GTI

GTI is owned by four individuals who also served as its directors: David Andrew Fink, David Armstrong Fink, Richard Kelso, and Timothy Mellon. Both of the Finks and Mellon were also the sole owners of ABR. The three companies shared the same four directors at the time the dispute arose: all three ABR owners plus Richard Kelso. {*Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, United Transportation Union, v. Springfield Terminal Railway Company, Aroostook and Bangor Resources, Inc.* US Court of Appeals First Circuit No. 99-1328, 5.Apr.00}

[This case involved a GRS attempt to use non-union ABR to switch facilities; the courts found against GRS. *Editor*]

Reaction

The organization People of Ayer Concerned about the Environment had fought against GRS building a second auto terminal in Ayer [see 03#08B], but had to settle for a set of conditions on the use of the parcel. Carolyn McCreary, spokesperson for PACE, said the move means that the “chances of building another, larger unloading facility are slimmer.” However, she pointed out, “GRS still owns the parcel [zoned for an aquifer] and we will not rest easy until it's conserved.” {ANR&P discussion 10.Feb.06}

NEW ENGLAND AUTO TERMINALS

Note: Ford is moving to Framingham. Now that the completion of the FRIP approaches, and the Quonset Development Corporation is seeking expressions of interest from companies who want to handle imported automobiles [see 19 January issue, *Rhode Island*], could some other auto manufacturers change the terminals they current use? Let's take a look.

CURRENT USE**East Brookfield** (served by CSXT, our *Directory* #357)

This facility now handles GM, Chrysler, Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Subarus of NY, Mitsubishi, and Mercedes, plus infrequent buyback (autos going back outbound).

Framingham (served by CSXT, our *Directory* #323)

This facility handled Toyota, Honda, and General Motors before East Brookfield opened, and still has some inventory. CSXT will now handle Ford here.

Westborough (served by CSXT, our *Directory* #347)

Not current used, though the railroad did move some oversized loads through there in 2005 [see 05#10A *Region*]. It formerly handled mostly Chrysler products.

Impact of Ford closings

On 23 January, Ford announced it would close three NS-served plants in 2006: the St. Louis and Atlanta assembly facilities and the Batavia Ohio transmission plant in 2008. In 2007, Ford will close the CSXT-served assembly plant in Wixom, Michigan. Ford has not identified the remaining ten facilities it will close. {Ford press release}

These closings do not affect the Fostoria, Ohio, mixing center where the unit auto trains originate, delivering the auto-racks to Ayer. *Editor*

Overall impact of auto difficulties

While General Motors announced in November 2005 that it would close parts or all of 12 plants, observers point out that autos produced by foreign companies in the United States, or imported, will more than make up the decreasing production of the US automakers. {*Rail Business* 30.Jan.06}

Auto terminals in New England will continue to have high overall traffic, though the marks may shift among the terminals. *Editor*

Ayer (CSXT facility, but served by GRS, our *Directory* #115)

This facility is owned by the Boston and Maine Corporation, leased by CSXT, and operated by Guilford-related Aroostook and Bangor Resources. It did handle Ford products, but will now stand empty.

Davisville (no rail yet, but PW coming)

North Atlantic Distribution handles imported Volkswagens, Audis, Subarus of New England, Lamborghini, and Bentley.

Boston (no rail)

Foreign Auto Services, at Massport's Moran Terminal, handles imported Subarus of New York, plus some detailing.

POSSIBLE CHANGES

Sources close to the auto situation say that East Brookfield has no more room, so it could not add customers. Because CSXT controls Ayer, Westborough, and Framingham, a customer would probably not be given good rates to move out of East Brookfield to those terminals. Could some leave for Davisville? Possibly, depending on fees.

Manufacturers wanting to use the Norfolk Southern Railway could site a terminal in Davisville. PW could use the same route as its coal trains to Johnson City, New York [see 31 January issue *Regional*], NS to D&H via the Green Mountain Gateway to reach Davisville, or even Worcester where PW has paved Greenwood Yard.

Could VW Audi leave Davisville? Possibly. VW moved to Davisville in 2002, some say because of the future FRIP [see 02#09A].

GRAFTON & UPTON

10 February, Worcester. ***THE OWNER OF THIS SHORT LINE HAS NOT YET SOLD IT***, said spokesperson Karen Busenburg. "In fact, a deal is farther away" than it was earlier, she stated [see 05#03B]. {ANR&P discussion}

NEW HAMPSHIRE

NH COMMUTER RAIL

7 February, Concord. ***NHDOT SHOULD HAVE INCLUDED COMMUTER RAIL IN ITS I-93 PLANNING***, said Nancy Girard, attorney for the Conservation Law Foundation, in filing suit to stop the expansion of I-93. According to an article in the organization's newsletter, doubling the highway's capacity from four lanes to eight between Salem and Manchester is an unsustainable and short-sighted solution. New Hampshire needs a balanced transportation system that includes rail and other innovative remedies. The new highway will be more congested than ever just eight years after the pavement dries. And, the local roads in the small towns off I-93 will be in a state of total gridlock.

Use Manchester-Salem line

"The state owns most of the rail line that runs from Manchester to the state line in Salem. Yet this alternative, which should have been considered, was rejected early in the process as the Department of Transportation moved forward with road widening only," said Girard. {CLF News 8.Feb.06}

WILTON SCENIC

3 February, Wilton NH. ***THE WILTON SCENIC RAILROAD MAY CONTINUE THOUGH STUART DRAPER HAS DIED***. At the end of January, unexpectedly, its founder and financier passed away. Peter Leishman, the owner of the Milton-Bennington Railroad who assisted with the Wilton Scenic, wrote: "Options are now being looked at to keep the WSRR operational... As you know, a major investment has been made to reopen and upgrade the trackage between Lyndeborough & Greenfield (10 miles) and the railroad's ridership has increased every year of operation. So, we are doing what we can to keep Draper's dream alive." {e-mail to ANR&P 3.Feb.06}

RHODE ISLAND

SOUTH COAST COMMUTER

13 February, Providence. **RIDOT WILL EXTEND SERVICE TO NORTH KINGSTOWN BY 2008**, according to Director James Capaldi. Construction will begin in spring 2006 on the passenger depot for TF Green airport in Warwick, and in 2007 for North Kingstown. At a cost of \$225 million, the MBTA will operate eight northbound trains each weekday.

RIDOT is negotiating an annual fee of \$1.5 million to \$3 million to use Amtrak lines south of Providence. The state government has ordered five double-decker rail cars from a New York firm at a cost of \$2 million each.

By 2020, RIDOT studies predict 1,000 riders will take the trains daily from North Kingstown (most going to Providence) and a few hundred more from Warwick (most going to Boston), according to Stephen Devine, the RIDOT project manager. {AP}

PAWTUCKET COMMUTER RAIL

31 January, Pawtucket. **PWMAYHOSTA COMMUTER RAIL STATION** at the Pawtucket Yard. The city's Department of Planning and Redevelopment has awarded a contract to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin to explore restoration of commuter rail to the city, preferably at the former depot on the Central Falls/Pawtucket line. [See photos of FRIP track under depot at 18 January issue and 05#09A.] VHB has five subcontractors: URS Corporation; Domenech, Hicks, Krockmalnic; Gordon R. Archibald Inc.; Public Finance Management; and Public Archeology Inc.

Barney S. Heath, assistant planning director, named the other bidders: Edwards and Kelcey; the Louis Berger Group; Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas; DMJM Harris; and Pare Engineering Corporation. Financing of \$344,820 (commuter rail feasibility study) and \$37,100 (site survey) will come from the state and federal government.

The 3.4-acre Pawtucket-Central Falls building and site belongs to Oscar W. Seelbinder of Memphis, Tennessee, who wants to build a small shopping plaza on the site. But city officials say they are confident that they can build a station platform and can secure a right of access to the tracks if commuter rail service resumes.

Heath said VHB has a year to complete the feasibility study. The first phase will involve determining how many people would get on the train in Pawtucket, how many parking spaces would be needed and what sort of platform would have to be built.

The Pawtucket Yard and Pawtucket Transfer

Because federal funding requires a review of alternative sites, RIDOT asked that the study examine PW's Pawtucket Yard in case the depot did not prove feasible. Recently used to transload steel, the yard may host the facility of the Pawtucket Transfer Operations [see 05#02A], depending on the outcome of its appeal of a city zoning decision. {John Castelluci in *Providence Journal* 1.Feb.06}

According to attorney Mike Horan, who is representing the Pawtucket Foundation in its effort to bar the transfer station, the Rhode Island Superior Court hearing the appeal has now received the entire record plus the briefs of the opposing parties. The case awaits the assigning of a judge to decide whether, based on the law and the facts, to overturn the city's decision against PTO.

Horan said that once the judge has the case, she or he could take six months to a year to decide it. {ANR&P discussion 7.Feb.06}

Daniel Poggi is no longer involved with PTO. {ANR&P discussion 7.Feb.06}

QUONSET POINT/DAVISVILLE

13 February, Davisville. **QDC HAS NOT YET ISSUED THE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST** for the auto terminal area, which it expected to do at the end of January [see 18 January issue]. Steve King, chief operating officer, said the Quonset Development Corporation is discussing some matters with 'the existing tenant [probably the auto terminal NORAD] and PW'. {e-mail to ANR&P}

VERMONT

IRVING BUYS OIL TERMINAL

26 January. **IRVING COMPLETED THE PURCHASE OF MOST OF JOHNSON & DIX.** While the purchase includes Johnson & Dix's residential and commercial home heating business in New Hampshire and Vermont, it does not include the Johnson & Dix wholesale gasoline business. Irving said the vast majority of J&D employees will continue in their jobs. {Irving press release }

Impact in White River Junction area

J&D had in 2005 purchased from Sprague the oil terminal in White River Junction served by NECR [see 05#12B *Vermont*]. J&D had planned to close its own non-rail-served tanks and use exclusively the rail-served terminal. Irving already owns the NECR-served propane facility directly adjacent to the oil terminal.

Irving also owns tanks in West Lebanon NH, on the former Northern line but not currently served by rail, though some people have investigated the possibility [see 04#10A *New Hampshire*].

According to Michelle Firmbach, spokesperson for Irving's US operations, the purchase did include the former Sprague facility: 'Our company recently purchased the Hartford Rail facilities located on Roundhouse Road. This is a fuel storage facility with direct rail access.' {e-mail to ANR&P 6.Feb.06 }

QUEBEC/MARITIMES

WHRC NEW TRAFFIC

9 February, Hantsport. **FUNDY GYPSUM IS MOVING HEAVY EQUIPMENT BY RAIL.** A westbound gypsum train consist included a flatcar with a tracked excavator, transferring from the mine up to the loader in Hantsport.

Weight restrictions are posted on local roads due to the extreme January thaw. {Andrew Reid report in *AtlanticRails* e-list }

Fundy explanation

On 3 January, Mike Bishop, mine and plant manager for Fundy, said his company frequently moved heavy equipment from the mine in Windsor to the loading facility in Hantsport and back. Though trucking it is preferable, when the roads are posted to prevent heavy loads (usually in spring with the thaw), Fundy could move the equipment by rail.

Bishop contracted with Scotia Rail Services [see *Regional*] to install a switch and track to create a new siding for the heavy equipment in Hantsport. {ANR&P discussion }

HALIFAX: HALTERM GETS MAERSK

31 January. **HALTERM ENTERED INTO A THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH MAERSK** to provide container handling services in the Port of Halifax for Maersk's new MECL 2 (Middle East Container Line) service to the East coast of North America via the Suez Canal. The first call of the weekly service will occur 24 February.

Based on preliminary estimates, the MECL 2 service is expected to increase container volume at Halterm by approximately 30 - 35% on an annual basis. "This is great news for Halterm, its Unitholders and the Port of Halifax," said Doug Rose, President of Halterm Limited. {Halterm press release }

The service

According to the Maersk website, MECL2 will call Colombo, Sri Lanka; Salalah, Oman; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; Algeciras, Spain; Halifax; Newark; Norfolk; Algeciras, Jeddah, Salalah, Colombo.

Additional rail service

Doug Rose, Halterm president, said on 1 February that he did not anticipate any problems with CN service. "I think CN is

aware of the situation but also I believe Maersk is planning a balanced service, so the rail cars required for import will be arriving with export containers on them.” {Tom Peters in Halifax *Herald* 2.Feb.06}

Estimated traffic

Maersk announced its return in November [see 05#11B]; it had formerly used Halterm [see 05#02A]. By projecting the first three quarters of 2005 [see 05#11B] through the end of the year, Halterm would total about 200,000 TEUs. An increase of 35% would add about 70,000 TEUs. The annual total of possibly 270,000 TEUs would place Halterm much closer to the Ceres total of upwards of 320,000 TEUs. *Editor*

HALIFAX: HUB PORT

31 January. **THE PORT CAN BECOME A TRANSHIPMENT HUB**, said George Malec, vice-president of operations and security. Over the past few years, a number of people have advanced the idea of massive ships unloading at only a few ports, whence smaller ships would fan out to other ports in the region. Halifax was considered as a hub for a service out of Scapa Flow [see 00#07].

Malec pointed out: “We are the deepest now on the Eastern seaboard regarding water depth, we just had a successful maiden call of one of the tallest post-Panamax ships on a regular call into Halifax and our cargo volumes are increasing, so we are actually positioning ourselves for that type of growth.”

David Fung, chairman and CEO of the ACDEG Group of Companies, said in Halifax recently the port needs to move quickly to establish itself as a major North American gateway and container cargo hub or risk losing business to other ports. China plans to build vessels that can carry up to 14,000 TEUs, and these vessels will stop at only a few ports.

Other ports, like Freeport in the Bahamas, are investing in infrastructure to go after this business. Hutchison Whampoa of Hong Kong, one of the world's largest independent terminal operators [it once bid to operate the South End Container Terminal (now Halterm's)—see 00#13], has partnered with the Greater Bahamas Port Authority with a main interest in developing a container cargo.

Different market than Freeport

Malec said that in looking at potential competition, “the important thing you have to note is which trade lanes you are actually competitive on.” Halifax is focused on “growing our business over the CN Rail service into the (U.S.) Midwest, Ontario, Quebec and Buffalo markets, for example. We are also looking at truck opportunities and marine opportunities . . . so a transshipment facility in the Bahamas wouldn't necessarily impact upon that.” {Tom Peters in Halifax *Herald* 1.Feb.06}

PEOPLE & EVENTS

Peter Touesnard, general manager of CBNS, has received a promotion from **RailAmerica** to become vice-president in charge of the Lone Star region, with offices in Dallas. Peter was open and helpful about the operation of CBNS, and I wish him well in

his new endeavour. No successor has yet been found.

At the **Vermont Agency of Transportation**, people are still seeing a successor to **Charlie Miller** as the rail program manager, temporarily held down by **Richard Hosking**. [See 05#11A]. Applications were due on 10 February.

Geoffrey Nickerson has left his position of general counsel for the **Springfield Terminal Railway Company** (operating arm of the **Guilford Rail System**) as of 2 February. No successor was named immediately.

Nickerson had held the job barely four months [see 05#10A], just as Katherine Potter before him had held the position only a short time after Rob Culliford left to assume the position of general counsel for Boston-Maine Airways.

RAILWAY SYMPOSIUM IN QUEBEC

On 2-3 May, TRAQ (Transport sur Rail au Quebec) will host the tenth annual Railway Symposium at the DELTA Sherbrooke Hotel and Conference Center in Sherbrooke PQ. SLR President Mario Brault will serve as Honorary President.

The Symposium provides a meeting point for both industries and government participants. Transport Québec and Transport Canada work in partnership with TRAQ to organize this event. An Exposition will accompany the symposium.

See: http://www.groupetraq.com/2006_e.html.

NEW ENGLAND RAILROAD CLUB

The Club will hold its annual Railway Expo in Worcester at the Spectrum on 28 March. The event will include booths of railroads and suppliers, plus seminars on emergency preparedness, alternative fuels, passenger rail, and transit. Keynote speaker at the evening meal: Joe Boardman, FRA administrator. See <http://nerailroadclub.com>.

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E-ISSUE