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Tuesday, October 03, 2017

Vallourec Star

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United States Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Re: EP 742 Public Listening Session, CSX Transportation's rail service issues

U.S. Surface Transportation Board:

Vallourec Star is a leading manufacturer of seamless steel pipe for the oil and gas industry. With operations in Youngstown, Ohio; Houston, Texas; and Muskogee, Oklahoma, our facilities are ideally positioned to serve the onshore and off shore oil and natural gas markets across North America.

Vallourec has had a longstanding positive working relationship with CSX moving inbound materials and outbound pipe via our Youngstown, OH facility. CSX is, in fact, a critical part of our supply chain for our pipe shipments traveling by unit train from Youngstown, OH to Galena Park, TX. With the help of our serving short line and the destination carrier in the west, CSX has moved our outbound loaded pipe train largely without issue.

In late July/early August we did begin to experience service interruptions within the New Castle and Ohio Junction area for both the unit train and inbound materials. CSX informed us of its operating system upgrade and potential bumps along the way as they implemented this new system. We've had effective communications with the CSX's sales and customer service teams and were advised of action plans to correct the issues we were experiencing with the delays in and around New Castle.

While the issues were concerning at the time, they were corrected and we have seen improvement in CSX's service. We support CSX's efforts and communications as they advance their service and look forward to a continued relationship.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Michael D. Wheatley'.

Michael Wheatley
Manager, Shipping and Logistics
Vallourec Star