

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Office of Economics

October 9, 2020

Dr. Simon Fuchs
 Assistant Adviser and Research Economist
 Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
 1000 Peachtree St NE
 Atlanta GA 30309

Re: Waybill Request WB20-41

Dear Dr. Fuchs:

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) has received your request under 49 C.F.R. § 1244.9(c) of September 15 for permission to access the confidential Carload Waybill Sample (CCWS) with unmasked revenues. Your request explains that you seek to build a quantitative multi and intermodal transportation flow model for freight traffic in the US and to perform an economic evaluation of the implementation of the double-stack rail transport technology. Specifically, you requested the unmasked CCWS for 1984-2019. Your request explained that these particular data were required because the CCWS is the best data available for this study and the collection of these data from other sources is not only burdensome but likely impossible. Notice of your request was published in the *Federal Register* on September 21, 2020. The Association of American Railroads (AAR) filed an objection to this request on October 5, 2020. The AAR objected to three aspects of your request. First, the equipment type should be limited to specifically boxcars and intermodal equipment. Second, the individual rail portions and the railroads involved should not be released. Third, the rate and revenue information for railroads, the unmasked revenues, should not be released.

I have reviewed your request and AAR's objection. Based on the complete and sufficiently detailed explanations and justifications contained in your request, I will grant access to the requested data. I will not impose the conditions that AAR has requested, because I believe those conditions would make it difficult, if not impossible, for you to complete your study. Specifically, you will have access to the unmasked CCWS data for 1984-2019. The 2019 CCWS will be released to you once it becomes available. This data may only be used for the purpose detailed in your request. ***This approval becomes effective when signed agreements from the individuals listed below are received by the STB:***

- a) *Dr. Simon Fuchs – Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta*
- b) *Dr. Woan Foong Wong – University of Oregon*

The expiration date for this agreement is October 31, 2021. Unless you seek and obtain a renewal from the STB, this agreement upon expiration obligates you to return or destroy all copies of the data (see item 6 of the agreement). Any request for renewal will need to provide a

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detailed explanation for why continued access to the data is necessary and demonstrate that you are continuing to actively use the data for the originally requested purpose.

Several aspects of the CCWS limit the conclusions that may be drawn from analysis of the CCWS: 1) the CCWS is a sample, and 2) the CCWS is based on terminating shipments from relatively large carriers. Only those railroads with more than 4,500 annual terminating carloads are included in the sample. The limited sampling of small railroads may have a substantial effect on studies covering areas served predominately by non-sampled railroads. For additional information on the CCWS, *see Reference Guide @ <https://prod.stb.gov/reports-data/waybill/>* on the Board's website.

The rules for release of waybill data are codified at 49 C.F.R. § 1244.9. The CCWS contains confidential shipper and railroad data. As a result, the CCWS is commercially sensitive and has the potential to cause competitive harm to shippers and railroads if disclosed. Therefore, the following agreement must be signed, and a copy of the signature pages returned to the STB, before any waybill data can be used.

Your signature acknowledges your agreement to comply with the following:

1. You will use the CCWS data released to you solely for the purpose requested.
2. Absent permission from the STB, you shall make the information contained in the CCWS (including work product and analyses derived from the CCWS) available only to the individuals identified above. The STB may approve access for additional individuals within your entity working on the particular project or study requiring the waybill data. Each such additional individual must review and sign this agreement, and return a copy of the signature page to the STB.
3. You will not release any CCWS data (including work product and analyses derived from the CCWS) to anyone who has not signed this agreement and been approved for access by the STB until the STB has had the opportunity to review the materials proposed for disclosure to ensure confidentiality.
4. You acknowledge that, in addition to the restrictions described in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, you are bound by the STB's rules governing use and disclosure of CCWS data. These include the confidentiality provisions of 49 C.F.R. §§ 1244.9(f)(1)-(3), which require that "[a]ny shipper data obtained from the Waybill Sample shall not be publicly released unless the data are aggregated to include at least three shippers." In addition, you agree not to disclose CCWS data that permits identification of an individual railroad.
5. You will refer any requests for CCWS data in your possession (including work product and analyses derived from the CCWS) to the STB for processing and will

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inform the requesting party of such referral to the STB. If you are compelled by law or order of a governmental or judicial body to release CCWS data, you shall notify the Board in writing within three days of any determination that CCWS data must be released, and in no event later than five days before the CCWS data is scheduled to be released.

6. In order to retain access to the CCWS beyond the expiration date specified above, you must submit a written request for an annual extension of the agreement no later than thirty days prior to the expiration date and the renewal request must be approved by the Office of Economics. **If an annual agreement is not signed and approved, you must certify by no later than the expiration date that all CCWS data (including all work product and analyses derived from the CCWS) obtained under this agreement has been destroyed or returned to the STB.**
7. Failure to request an extension (if necessary), or destroy or return CCWS data when required, may prevent any future release of CCWS data to you. Violations of this agreement may subject you to sanctions by the Board.

After all parties have signed and returned this agreement, please contact Mr. Dusenberry (202) 245-0319 to make the necessary arrangements to have a copy of the data sent to you. The STB will provide the data by email through file transfer protocol. Prior payment of processing and mailing cost of **\$122 (\$61 per confidentiality agreement)** is required. Payment can be made through the Board's electronic payment system, Pay.gov. Your payment through Pay.gov will generate a unique Pay.gov transaction number, which you will need to provide with your signed agreement. Pay.gov accepts payment through bank accounts, credit cards, debit cards with a MasterCard or Visa logo, and digital wallet.

Sincerely,

William Brennan

William Brennan
Director
Office of Economics

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I have read and understand the conditions for release of the CCWS data. I agree to comply fully with these conditions and the provisions of this confidentiality agreement. No later than thirty days before the agreement expires, I will request an extension of this agreement, if necessary. If no extension is requested, I will return or destroy all CCWS data and certify that I have done so. I have the authority to sign this agreement.

By: Dr. Simon Fuchs

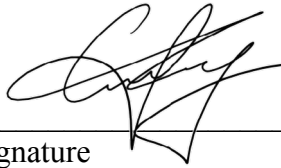
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Fuchs', written over a horizontal line.

Signature

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By: Dr. Woan Foong Wong

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Woan Foong Wong', is written over a horizontal line.

Signature