

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001
Office of Economics

October 17, 2024

Josie Ortiz
Project Manager, Capital Planning
Harris County Toll Road Authority
7701 Wilshire Place Drive
Houston, TX 77040

Re: Waybill Request WB24-42

Dear Mr. Ortiz:

The Surface Transportation Board (STB or Board) has received your request under 49 C.F.R. § 1244.9(c) of August 20, 2024 for permission to access certain data from the 2022 confidential Carload Waybill Sample (CCWS) with masked revenues. Specifically, from the 2022 CCWS, you requested select fields for records where the traffic originated, terminated, and or passed through Harris County, Texas. This request is related to a Truck Route Study being conducted by HDR, which will “use available data and stakeholder input to provide a clear understanding of the travel patterns, commodity flow levels and forecasts, and compile the county’s freight profile and its impact to the local and regional economies.” Your request stated that confidential data was needed “to understand the modal split and the county’s position in regional and international freight markets by estimating the total inbound, outbound, within, and through rail flows in Harris County, which cannot be calculated by the publicly available Carload Waybill Sample at the BEA level.” In addition, you requested access for your consulting firm, S&P Global, so that it can provide a database connected to the Truck Route Study. Notice of your request was published in the *Federal Register* on September 20, 2024, and no objections were received.

Based on the complete and sufficiently detailed explanations and justifications contained in your request, your request to access the requested data will be authorized. The CCWS does not identify which counties rail traffic traverses. Because you have indicated that your analysis requires data concerning travel patterns for the specific county of Harris County, Texas, you will have access to select fields for the masked 2022 confidential Carload Waybill Sample for traffic that originated, terminated, or passed through the state of Texas. You will receive the fields that you indicated were “Required” or “Helpful” in the spreadsheet attached to your request. 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) *Josie Ortiz – Harris County Toll Road Authority*
- b) *Karlis Pujats – S&P Global*
- c) *Bengt Muten – S&P Global*
- d) *Mania Flaskou – HDR*

Waybill Agreement WB24-42

The expiration date for this agreement is October 31, 2025. 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).

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 @ <https://www.stb.gov/reports-data/waybill/>.

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 2 and 3 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 **\$248 (\$62 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. Payment can also be made directly to the Board via check or money order.

Sincerely,

KRISTEN
MONACO

Digitally signed by
KRISTEN MONACO
Date: 2024.10.17
13:24:07 -04'00'

Kristen Monaco, PhD
Director
Office of Economics

Waybill Agreement WB24-42

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: Josie Ortiz

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Josie Ortiz
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10/17/2024

Signature

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By: Karlis Pujats

Signed by:

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Signature _____ 10/17/2024

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By: Bengt Muten

Signed by:

62BB4CC3EBA94FE...
Signature

10/17/2024

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By: Mania Flaskou

Signed by:
Mania Flaskou
0AD7440EFD844F4...
Signature

10/20/2024
