



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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The U.S. Department of Transportation Broadcast News Service for Thursday, March 15, has an actuality on railroad safety, and stories on Coast Guard weather stations and an airport plan for the Nation's Capital.

First, an actuality with Federal Railroad Administrator John Ingram, from an address to the FRA Eastern Regional Safety Conference, Thursday, in Roanoke, Virginia.

"We are intensifying our work with the railroads on setting up safety programs. Now we're doing this before, and for a long time, in fact. But from now on, we'll hammer away at the needs to educate railroaders to the hazards -- all the hazards, from tracks to equipment to absent common sense.

"The setting and enforcing of standards is a vital part of a total safety program -- but it is really the 'tip of the iceberg.' The basis for improved railroad safety is composed of many elements -- good design of plant and equipment, careful operating practices, adequate training and sensible rule-making. And all of these are receiving the attention of FRA."

Next, a story by a Department spokesman on the phasing out of some Coast Guard installations.

"The Coast Guard will phase out weather stations in the mid-Atlantic and mid-Pacific over the next 15 months, resulting in the decommissioning of 13 major cutters. These stations provide weather data for the U.S. National Weather Service and act as navigation aids for aircraft flying across the oceans. But, new navigation techniques, weather satellites and data bouys are ending the need for them. A saving of about \$17 million a year will be realized.

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"This will leave only 1 ocean weather station. It operates off the Delaware coast, with the unique job of tracking sneak storms that used to hit the Northeast without warning."

Finally, a story on an airport study of the capital area.

"The Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration has approved a \$166 thousand grant to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for the preparation of a Regional Airport System Plan. The objective of the 2-year study is to develop a comprehensive plan and program for both the airline and general aviation aircraft using all-types of airports in the D.C. area and to recommend an action program to improve and develop the region's air facilities."

This has been the Transportation News Report.

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