

Subpart F—Hearings

§ 821.37 Notice of hearing.

(a) *Notice.* The chief law judge (or his or her law judge delegate) or the law judge to whom the case is assigned shall set a reasonable date, time and place for the hearing. The notice of the hearing shall be served at least 30 days in advance thereof, and shall include notice of the nature of the hearing. The law judge may set the hearing fewer than 30 days after the notice of hearing is served if the parties agree to an earlier hearing date. In setting the hearing date, due regard shall be given to any need for discovery. In setting the place of the hearing, due regard shall be given to the convenience of the parties and to conservation of Board funds. The location of the witnesses and the suitability of a site served by a scheduled air carrier are added factors to be considered in setting the hearing location, as is Board policy that foreign-held hearings are appropriate only in the most extraordinary circumstances.

(b) *Hearings in several sessions.* Where appropriate, the law judge may determine that a hearing will be held in one or more sessions at the same or different places.

[40 FR 30243, July 17, 1975, as amended at 49 FR 28250, July 11, 1984, 59 FR 59048, Nov. 15, 1994]

§ 821.38 Evidence.

(a) Every party shall have the right to present a case-in-chief or defense by oral or documentary evidence, to submit evidence in rebuttal, and to conduct such cross-examination as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts. Hearsay evidence (including hearsay within hearsay where there are acceptable circumstantial indicia of trustworthiness) is admissible.

(b) All material and relevant evidence should be admitted, but a law judge may exclude unduly repetitious evidence pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 556(d) (Administrative Procedure). Any evidence that is offered and excluded may be described (via an “offer of proof”),

and that description should be made a part of the record.

[59 FR 59048, Nov. 15, 1994, as amended at 65 FR 42639, July 11, 2000]

§ 821.39 Argument and submissions.

At the hearing, the law judge shall give the parties adequate opportunity for the presentation of arguments in support of, or in opposition to, motions, objections, and rulings. Prior to the initial decision, the parties shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to submit for consideration proposed findings and conclusions and supporting reasons therefor.

§ 821.40 Record.

The transcript of testimony and exhibits, together with all papers, requests, and rulings filed in the proceeding shall constitute the exclusive record of the proceeding. The record shall also include any proceeding upon an affidavit of personal bias or disqualification of a law judge. Copies of the transcript may be obtained by any party upon payment of the reasonable cost thereof. A copy may be examined at the National Transportation Safety Board Public Reference Room No. 806D, at 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20594.

§ 821.41 Certification to the Board.

At any time prior to the close of the hearing, the Board may direct the law judge to certify any question or the entire record in the proceeding to the Board for decision, except an interlocutory ruling. In cases where the record is certified to the Board, the law judge shall not render an initial decision but shall only recommend to the Board a decision as provided in 5 U.S.C. 557 (Administrative Procedure).

Subpart G—Initial Decision

§ 821.42 Initial decision by law judge.

(a) *Written or oral decision.* The law judge may render his or her initial decision orally at the close of the hearing, or he or she may render such decision in writing at a later date, except as provided in § 821.56(b).

(b) *Contents.* The initial decision shall include a statement of findings

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and conclusions, and the grounds therefor, upon all material issues of fact, credibility of witnesses, law, or discretion presented on the record, the appropriate order, and the reasons therefor.

(c) *Furnishing copy of oral decision and issuance date.* If the initial decision is rendered orally, a copy thereof, excerpted from the transcript of the record, shall be furnished the parties by the Office of Administrative Law Judges. Irrespective of the date of mailing of such copy, the issuance date of the decision shall be the actual date of the rendering of the oral decision.

[40 FR 30243, July 17, 1975, as amended at 59 FR 59049, Nov. 15, 1994]

§ 821.43 Effect of law judge's initial decision and filing of an appeal therefrom.

If an appeal from the initial decision is not timely filed with the Board by a party, the initial decision shall become final but shall not be precedent binding on the Board. The filing of a timely appeal shall stay the initial decision.

[59 FR 59049, Nov. 15, 1994]

Subpart H—Appeals from Initial Decisions

§ 821.47 Notice of appeal.

(a) A party may appeal from a law judge's order or from the initial decision by filing with the Board and serving on the other parties (pursuant to § 821.8) a notice of appeal within 10 days after an oral initial decision has been rendered or a written decision or a final or appealable (see § 821.16) order has been served. At any time before the date for filing an appeal from an initial decision or order has passed, the law judge or the Board may, for good cause shown, extend the time within which to file an appeal, and the law judge may also reopen the case for good cause on notice to the parties.

(b) A law judge may not reconsider his or her initial decision once the time for appealing to the Board from the initial decision has expired or once an appeal with the Board has been filed. However, a timely request for reconsideration by the law judge of his or her decision, filed before an appeal to

the Board has been taken, will stay the deadline for appealing to the Board until 10 days after the date the law judge serves his or her decision on the request. For the purpose of this section, a request for reconsideration submitted on the same date as a notice of appeal will be deemed to have been filed first.

[59 FR 59049, Nov. 15, 1994]

§ 821.48 Briefs and oral argument.

(a) *Appeal briefs.* Each appeal must be perfected within 50 days after an oral initial decision has been rendered, or 30 days after service of a written initial decision, by filing with the Board and serving on the other party a brief in support of the appeal. Appeals may be dismissed by the Board on its own initiative or on motion of the other party, in cases where a party who has filed a notice of appeal fails to perfect his or her appeal by filing a timely brief.

(b) *Contents of appeal brief.* Each appeal brief shall set forth in detail the objections to the initial decision, and shall state whether such objections are related to alleged errors in the law judge's findings of fact and conclusions or alleged errors in his or her order. It shall also state the reasons for such objections and the relief requested.

(c) *Waiver of objections on appeal.* Any error contained in the initial decision which is not objected to may be deemed to have been waived. Where any objection is based upon evidence of record, such objection need not be considered by the Board unless specific record citations to the pertinent evidence are furnished in the appeal brief.

(d) *Reply brief.* A brief in reply to the appeal brief may be filed by the other party within 30 days after the appeal brief has been served upon him or her. A copy of the reply brief shall be served upon the party who has appealed from the initial decision. Where the reply brief relies upon evidence of record, specific record citations to the pertinent evidence shall be furnished in the reply brief.

(e) *Other briefs.* Subsequent to brief filing, parties may file citations to supplemental authorities. This procedure may be used only for identifying new, relevant decisions, not to correct omissions in briefing or to respond to a