

the initial or recommended decision, final decision, or decision on a petition for review or reconsideration. The Board or the administrative law judge shall endeavor to render the pending decision not later than the target date.

(c) *Time for promulgating target dates.*

(1) In the case of initial, recommended, or final decisions, notice of target dates shall be issued, served, and filed within 20 days of the submission of closing briefs, or the conclusion of oral argument to the administrative law judge or the Board, as may be appropriate.

(2) In the case of petitions for review or for reconsideration, notices of target dates shall be issued, served, and filed within 20 days of the date for the filing of answers: *Provided*, That, in the case of petitions for reconsideration of Board decisions awarding new route authority, the Board shall, in lieu of issuing individual target dates, endeavor to render its decision no later than the day preceding the effective date of the new authority awarded.

[PS-71, 41 FR 41407, Sept. 22, 1976, as amended by PS-73, 42 FR 21611, Apr. 28, 1977]

#### § 399.63 Role of staff in route proceedings.

(a) *General.* This policy statement establishes the standards applicable to staff participation in oral hearing cases involving award of route authority.

(b) *Standards.* The staff's role during such hearings, primarily because it acts in the broad public interest, and not for a particular private or local interest, is to assure that essential evidence is introduced to resolve the public interest issues; that the evidence submitted by the parties is subject to adversary testing, and that decisional options are developed with the public interest in mind. In route cases designated by the Board that offer the opportunity for developing new policies to adapt to the administration of the Federal Aviation Act or that raise unusual evidentiary issues, a prehearing presentation by staff of decisional options will contribute to a better trial record, be consistent with traditional notions of fundamental fairness, better serve the Board's decisionmaking needs and ultimately serve the public interest. In any route case where the Board

has not required the staff to participate by making a prehearing presentation, the staff shall present a prehearing presentation of decisional options if the administrative law judge finds that there exists unusual policy or evidentiary issues which clearly require such a presentation. We believe it is not desirable for the staff to advocate the adoption of a single decisional option at the outset of a case. Accordingly,

(1) In route cases designated by the Board that offer the opportunity for developing new policies, the staff shall make a prehearing presentation of the decisional options available, and describe the kinds of evidence needed or available to develop each option. The staff need not and should not be required to develop evidence on each option. In every case, after the close of the hearing, however, the staff shall advocate a position based upon one or more of the decisional options identified in its prehearing presentation or developed at trial.

(2) In any route case in which the administrative law judge finds that there exists unusual policy or evidentiary issues clearly requiring a prehearing presentation, the staff shall submit a prehearing statement of the decisional options available.

(3) To the extent possible, the Board, in its instituting orders, will identify or designate the cases which involve the development of new policies or unusual evidentiary issues that will require the type of staff participation described in § 399.63(b)(1).

[PS-76, 43 FR 19354, May 5, 1978]

### Subpart F—Policies Relating to Rulemaking Proceedings

#### § 399.70 Cross-references to the Office of the Secretary's Rulemaking Procedures.

The rules and policies relating to the disposition of rulemaking petitions by the Department of Transportation Office of the Secretary are located in its rulemaking procedures contained in 49 CFR part 5. The criteria for identifying significant rules and determining whether a regulatory analysis will be