

similar to those capable of arising before the STB. The initial roster of arbitrators shall be established by the RSTAC in consultation with the Chairman of the STB, and shall contain not fewer than 21 names. The roster shall thereafter be maintained by the Chairman of the STB, who may augment the roster at any time to include other eligible arbitrators and may remove from the roster any arbitrators who are no longer available. The initial roster shall be published; thereafter the roster shall be available to the public, upon request, at all times. For each arbitrator on the roster, the roster shall disclose the level of the fee (or fee range) charged by that arbitrator.

(b) The parties to a dispute may select an arbitrator (or panel of arbitrators) and submit the name(s) (and, if not already on the roster of arbitrators, the qualifications) of the agreed-upon person(s) in writing to the Chairman of the STB. Any person(s) so designated who is not already on the roster, if found to be qualified, will be added to the roster and may be used as the arbitrator(s) for that dispute.

(c) If the parties cannot agree upon an arbitrator (or panel of arbitrators), then each party shall, using the roster of arbitrators, strike through the names of any arbitrators to whom they object, number the remaining arbitrators on the list in order of preference, and submit its marked roster to the Chairman of the STB. The Chairman will then designate the arbitrator (or panel of arbitrators, if mutually preferred by the parties) in order of the highest combined ranking of all of the parties to the arbitration.

(d) The process of selecting an Arbitrator pursuant to this section shall be conducted confidentially following the completion of the Arbitration Commencement Procedures set forth in §1108.7 hereof.

(e) If, at any time during the arbitration process, a selected Arbitrator becomes incapacitated, unwilling or unable to fulfill his/her duties, or if both parties agree that the arbitrator should be replaced, a replacement Arbitrator will be promptly selected under the process set forth in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

#### **§1108.7 Arbitration commencement procedures.**

(a) Each demand for arbitration shall be commenced with a written complaint. Because arbitration under these procedures is both voluntary and binding, the complaint must set forth in detail: the nature of the dispute; the statutory basis of STB jurisdiction; a clear, separate statement of each issue as to which arbitration is sought; and the specific relief sought. Each complaint shall contain a sworn, notarized verification, by a responsible official of the complaining party, that the factual allegations contained in the complaint are true and accurate. Each complaint must contain a statement that the complainant is willing to arbitrate pursuant to these arbitration rules and be bound by the result thereof in accordance with those rules, and must contain a demand that the defendants likewise agree to arbitrate and be so bound.

(b) The complaining party shall serve, by overnight mail or hand delivery, a signed and dated original of the complaint on each defendant (on a responsible official at his or her usual place of business), and an original and two copies on the STB, accompanied by the filing fee prescribed under §1108.5(a) and set forth in 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(87). Each complaint served on a defendant shall be accompanied by a copy of this part 1108.

(c) Any defendant willing to enter into arbitration under these rules must, within 30 days of the date of a complaint, answer the complaint in writing. The answer must contain a statement that the defendant is willing to arbitrate each arbitration issue set forth in the complaint or specify which such issues the defendant is willing to arbitrate. If the answer contains an agreement to arbitrate some but not all of the arbitration issues in the complaint, the complainant will have 10 days from the date of the answer to advise the defendant and the STB in writing whether the complainant is willing to arbitrate on that basis. Upon the agreement of the parties to arbitrate, these rules will be deemed incorporated by reference into the arbitration agreement.

(d) The answer of a party willing to arbitrate shall also contain that party's specific admissions or denials of each factual allegation contained in the complaint, affirmative defenses, and any counterclaims or set-offs which the defendant wishes to assert against the complainant. The right of a defendant to advance any counterclaims or set-offs, and the capacity of an Arbitrator to entertain and render an award with respect thereto, is subject to the same jurisdictional limits as govern the complaint.

(e) A defendant's answer must be served on the complainant, other parties, and the STB in the same manner as the complaint.

(f) A defendant willing to enter into arbitration under these procedures only if it is able to obtain cross-relief against another defendant or a non-party may serve an answer containing an agreement to arbitrate that is conditioned upon the willingness of any such third party to enter into arbitration as a third party defendant. Simultaneously with the service of any such conditional answer, the defendant making such answer shall serve a complaint and demand for arbitration on the party whose presence that defendant deems to be essential, such complaint and demand to be drawn and served in the same manner as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section. A defendant receiving such a complaint and demand for arbitration and that is willing to so arbitrate shall respond in the same manner as provided in paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) of this section.

(g) Upon receipt of a complaint and demand for arbitration served by a complainant on a defendant, or by a defendant on a third-party defendant, the STB promptly will notify the parties serving and receiving such documents of any patent deficiencies, jurisdictional or otherwise, which the STB deems fatal to the processing of the complaint, and will suspend the timetable for processing the arbitration until further notice. If the complainant is unwilling or unable to remedy such deficiencies to the satisfaction of the STB within such time as the STB may specify, the complaint shall be deemed to be withdrawn without prejudice.

Upon satisfaction that two or more parties have unconditionally agreed to arbitrate under these procedures, the STB will so notify the parties and commence procedures for the selection of an Arbitrator.

(h) An agreement to arbitrate pursuant to these rules will be deemed a contract to arbitrate, subject to limited review by the STB pursuant to §1108.11(c), for the purpose of subjecting the arbitration award to the provisions of 9 U.S.C. 9 (court enforcement of an arbitration award), and 9 U.S.C. 10 (vacation of an arbitration award by a court on certain limited grounds).

#### §1108.8 Arbitration procedures.

(a) The Arbitrator will establish rules, including timetables, for each arbitration proceeding.

(1) The evidentiary process will be completed within 90 days from the start date established by the arbitrator, and the arbitrator's decision will be issued within 30 days from the close of the record. The parties may agree to vary these timetables, however, subject to the approval of the arbitrator. Matters handled through arbitration under these rules are exempted from any applicable statutory time limits, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502.

(2) Discovery will be available only upon the agreement of the parties.

(b) Evidence will be submitted under oath. Evidence may be submitted in writing or orally, at the direction of the Arbitrator. Hearings for the purpose of cross-examining witnesses will be permitted at the sound discretion of the Arbitrator. The Arbitrator, at his/her discretion, may require additional evidence.

(c) Subject to alteration by the Arbitrator or by agreement of the parties in individual proceedings, as a general rule, where evidence is submitted in written form, the complaining party will proceed first, and the defendant will proceed next. The complainant will then be given an opportunity to submit a reply. At the discretion of the Arbitrator, argument may be submitted with each evidentiary filing or in the form of a brief after the submission of all evidence. Page limits will be set by each Arbitrator for all written