

TITLE 45 - RAILROADS
CHAPTER 8 - RAILWAY LABOR
SUBCHAPTER I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 151. Definitions; short title

When used in this chapter and for the purposes of this chapter—

First. The term “carrier” includes any railroad subject to the jurisdiction of the Surface Transportation Board, any express company that would have been subject to subtitle IV of title 49, as of December 31, 1995,¹ and any company which is directly or indirectly owned or controlled by or under common control with any carrier by railroad and which operates any equipment or facilities or performs any service (other than trucking service) in connection with the transportation, receipt, delivery, elevation, transfer in transit, refrigeration or icing, storage, and handling of property transported by railroad, and any receiver, trustee, or other individual or body, judicial or otherwise, when in the possession of the business of any such “carrier”: Provided, however, That the term “carrier” shall not include any street, interurban, or suburban electric railway, unless such railway is operating as a part of a general steam-railroad system of transportation, but shall not exclude any part of the general steam-railroad system of transportation now or hereafter operated by any other motive power. The Surface Transportation Board is authorized and directed upon request of the Mediation Board or upon complaint of any party interested to determine after hearing whether any line operated by electric power falls within the terms of this proviso. The term “carrier” shall not include any company by reason of its being engaged in the mining of coal, the supplying of coal to a carrier where delivery is not beyond the mine tipple, and the operation of equipment or facilities therefor, or in any of such activities.

Second. The term “Adjustment Board” means the National Railroad Adjustment Board created by this chapter.

Third. The term “Mediation Board” means the National Mediation Board created by this chapter.

Fourth. The term “commerce” means commerce among the several States or between any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia and any foreign nation, or between any Territory or the District of Columbia and any State, or between any Territory and any other Territory, or between any Territory and the District of Columbia, or within any Territory or the District of Columbia, or between points in the same State but through any other State or any Territory or the District of Columbia or any foreign nation.

Fifth. The term “employee” as used herein includes every person in the service of a carrier (subject to its continuing authority to supervise and direct the manner of rendition of his service) who performs any work defined as that of an employee or subordinate official in the orders of the Surface Transportation Board now in effect, and as the same may be amended or interpreted by orders hereafter entered by the Board pursuant to the authority which is conferred upon it to enter orders amending or interpreting such existing orders: Provided, however, That no occupational classification made by order of the Surface Transportation Board shall be construed to define the crafts according to which railway employees may be organized by their voluntary action, nor shall the jurisdiction or powers of such employee organizations be regarded as in any way limited or defined by the provisions of this chapter or by the orders of the Board.

The term “employee” shall not include any individual while such individual is engaged in the physical operations consisting of the mining of coal, the preparation of coal, the handling (other

than movement by rail with standard railroad locomotives) of coal not beyond the mine tipple, or the loading of coal at the tipple.

Sixth. The term “representative” means any person or persons, labor union, organization, or corporation designated either by a carrier or group of carriers or by its or their employees, to act for it or them.

Seventh. The term “district court” includes the United States District Court for the District of Columbia; and the term “court of appeals” includes the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

This chapter may be cited as the “Railway Labor Act.”

Footnotes

¹ So in original.

(May 20, 1926, ch. 347, § 1, 44 Stat. 577; June 7, 1934, ch. 426, 48 Stat. 926; June 21, 1934, ch. 691, § 1, 48 Stat. 1185; June 25, 1936, ch. 804, 49 Stat. 1921; Aug. 13, 1940, ch. 664, §§ 2, 3, 54 Stat. 785, 786; June 25, 1948, ch. 646, § 32(a), (b), 62 Stat. 991; May 24, 1949, ch. 139, § 127, 63 Stat. 107; Pub. L. 104–88, title III, § 322, Dec. 29, 1995, 109 Stat. 950; Pub. L. 104–264, title XII, § 1223, Oct. 9, 1996, 110 Stat. 3287.)

References in Text

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning act May 20, 1926, ch. 347, 44 Stat. 577, as amended, known as the Railway Labor Act, which enacted this chapter and amended sections 225 and 348 of former Title 28, Judicial Code and Judiciary. Sections 225 and 348 of former Title 28 were repealed by section 39 of act June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 992, section 1 of which enacted Title 28, Judiciary and Judicial Procedure. Section 225 of former Title 28 was reenacted as sections 1291 to 1294 of Title 28. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see this section and Tables.

Codification

Provisions of act Aug. 13, 1940, § 2, similar to those comprising par. First of this section, limiting the term “employer” as applied to mining, etc., of coal, were formerly contained in section 228a of this title. Provisions of section 3 of the act, similar to those comprising par. Fifth of this section, limiting the term “employee” as applied to mining, etc., of coal, were formerly contained in sections 228a, 261, and 351 of this title, and section 1532 of former Title 26, Internal Revenue Code, 1939.

As originally enacted, par. Seventh contained references to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. Act June 25, 1936 substituted “the district court of the United States for the District of Columbia” for “the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia”, and act June 25, 1948, as amended by act May 24, 1949, substituted “United States District Court for the District of Columbia” for “district court of the United States for the District of Columbia”.

As originally enacted, par. Seventh contained references to the “circuit court of appeals”. Act June 25, 1948, as amended by act May 24, 1949, substituted “court of appeals” for “circuit court of appeals”.

As originally enacted, par. Seventh contained references to the “Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia”. Act June 7, 1934, substituted “United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia” for “Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia”.

Amendments

1996—Par. First. Pub. L. 104–264 inserted “, any express company that would have been subject to subtitle IV of title 49, as of December 31, 1995,” after “Board” the first place it appeared.

1995—Par. First. Pub. L. 104–88, § 322(1), (2), substituted “railroad subject to the jurisdiction of the Surface Transportation Board” for “express company, sleeping-car company, carrier by railroad, subject to the Interstate Commerce Act” and “Surface Transportation Board” for “Interstate Commerce Commission”.

Par. Fifth. Pub. L. 104–88, § 322(2), (3), substituted “Surface Transportation Board” for “Interstate Commerce Commission” in two places and “Board” for “Commission” in two places.

NB: This unofficial compilation of the U.S. Code is current as of Jan. 4, 2012 (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/uscprint.html>).

1940—Act Aug. 13, 1940, inserted last sentence of par. First, and second par. of par. Fifth.

1934—Act June 21, 1934, added par. Sixth and redesignated provisions formerly set out as par. Sixth as Seventh.

Effective Date of 1996 Amendment

Except as otherwise specifically provided, amendment by Pub. L. 104–264 applicable only to fiscal years beginning after Sept. 30, 1996, and not to be construed as affecting funds made available for a fiscal year ending before Oct. 1, 1996, see section 3 of Pub. L. 104–264, set out as a note under section 106 of Title 49, Transportation.

Effective Date of 1995 Amendment

Amendment by Pub. L. 104–88 effective Jan. 1, 1996, see section 2 of Pub. L. 104–88, set out as an Effective Date note under section 701 of Title 49, Transportation.

Restriction on Establishment of New Annuities or Pensions

Pub. L. 91–215, § 7, Mar. 17, 1970, 84 Stat. 72, provided that: “No carrier and no representative of employees, as defined in section 1 of the Railway Labor Act [this section], shall, before April 1, 1974, utilize any of the procedures of such Act [this chapter], to seek to make any changes in the provisions of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 [section 228a et seq. of this title] for supplemental annuities or to establish any new class of pensions or annuities, other than annuities payable out of the Railroad Retirement Account provided under section 15(a) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 [subsection (a) of section 228o of this title], to become effective prior to July 1, 1974; nor shall any such carrier or representative of employees until July 1, 1974, engage in any strike or lockout to seek to make any such changes or to establish any such new class of pensions or annuities: Provided, That nothing in this section shall inhibit any carrier or representative of employees from seeking any change with respect to benefits payable out of the Railroad Retirement Account provided under section 15(a) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 [subsection (a) of section 228o of this title].”

Social Insurance and Labor Relations of Railroad Coal-Mining Employees; Retroactive Operation of Act August 13, 1940; Effect on Payments, Rights, etc.

Sections 4–7 of act Aug. 13, 1940, as amended by Reorg. Plan No. 2 of 1946, § 4, eff. July 16, 1946, 11 F.R. 7873, 60 Stat. 1095, with regard to the operation and effect of the laws amended, provided:

“Sec. 4. (a) The laws hereby expressly amended (section 1532 of Title 26, I.R.C. 1939 [former Title 26, Internal Revenue Code of 1939] and sections 151, 215, 228a, 261, and 351 of this title), the Social Security Act, approved August 14, 1935 (section 301 et seq. of Title 42), and all amendments thereto, shall operate as if each amendment herein contained had been enacted as a part of the law it amends, at the time of the original enactment of such law.

“(b) No person (as defined in the Carriers Taxing Act of 1937 [section 261 et seq. of this title]) shall be entitled, by reason of the provisions of this Act, to a refund of, or relief from liability for, any income or excise taxes paid or accrued, pursuant to the provisions of the Carriers Taxing Act of 1937 or subchapter B of chapter 9 of the Internal Revenue Code [section 1500 et seq. of former Title 26, Internal Revenue Code of 1939], prior to the date of the enactment of this Act [Aug. 13, 1940] by reason of employment in the service of any carrier by railroad subject to part I of the Interstate Commerce Act [former 49 U.S.C. 1 et seq.], but any individual who has been employed in such service of any carrier by railroad subject to part I of the Interstate Commerce Act as is excluded by the amendments made by this Act from coverage under the Carriers Taxing Act of 1937 and subchapter B of chapter 9 of the Internal Revenue Code, and who has paid income taxes under the provisions of such Act or subchapter, and any carrier by railroad subject to part I of the Interstate Commerce Act which has paid excise taxes under the provisions of the Carriers Taxing Act of 1937 or subchapter B of chapter 9 of the Internal Revenue Code, may, upon making proper application therefor to the Bureau of Internal Revenue [now Internal Revenue Service], have the amount of taxes so paid applied in reduction of such tax liability with respect to employment, as may, by reason of the amendments made by this Act, accrue against them under the provisions of title VIII of the Social Security Act [section 1001 et seq. of Title 42] or the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (subchapter A of chapter 9 of the Internal Revenue Code) [section 1400 et seq. of former Title 26].

“(c) Nothing contained in this Act shall operate (1) to affect any annuity, pension, or death benefit granted under the Railroad Retirement Act of 1935 [section 215 et seq. of this title] or the Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 [section 228a et seq. of this title], prior to the date of enactment of this Act [Aug. 13, 1940], or (2) to include any of the services on the basis of which any such annuity or pension was granted, as employment within the meaning of section 210(b) of the Social Security Act or section 209(b) of such Act, as amended [sections 410 (b) and 409 (b), respectively, of Title 42]. In any case in which a death benefit alone has been granted, the amount of such death benefit attributable to services, coverage of which is affected by this Act, shall be deemed to have been paid to the deceased under section 204 of the Social Security Act [section 404 of Title 42] in effect prior to January 1, 1940, and deductions shall be made from any insurance benefit or benefits payable under the Social Security Act, as amended [section 301 et seq.

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of Title 42], with respect to wages paid to an individual for such services until such deductions total the amount of such death benefit attributable to such services.

“(d) Nothing contained in this Act shall operate to affect the benefit rights of any individual under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act [section 351 et seq. of this title] for any day of unemployment (as defined in section 1(k) of such Act [section 351 (k) of this title]) occurring prior to the date of enactment of this Act. [Aug. 13, 1940]

“Sec. 5. Any application for payment filed with the Railroad Retirement Board prior to, or within sixty days after, the enactment of this Act shall, under such regulations as the Federal Security Administrator may prescribe, be deemed to be an application filed with the Federal Security Administrator by such individual or by any person claiming any payment with respect to the wages of such individual, under any provision of section 202 of the Social Security Act, as amended [section 402 of Title 42].

“Sec. 6. Nothing contained in this Act, nor the action of Congress in adopting it, shall be taken or considered as affecting the question of what carriers, companies, or individuals, other than those in this Act specifically provided for, are included in or excluded from the provisions of the various laws to which this Act is an amendment.

“Sec. 7. (a) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1605(b) of the Internal Revenue Code [section 1605(b) of former Title 26, Internal Revenue Code of 1939], no interest shall, during the period February 1, 1940, to the eighty-ninth day after the date of enactment of this Act [Aug. 13, 1940], inclusive, accrue by reason of delinquency in the payment of the tax imposed by section 1600 with respect to services affected by this Act performed during the period July 1, 1939, to December 31, 1939, inclusive, with respect to which services amounts have been paid as contributions under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act [section 351 et seq. of this title] prior to the date of enactment of this Act.

“(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1601(a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code [section 1601(a)(3) of former Title 26, Internal Revenue Code of 1939], the credit allowable under section 1601 (a) against the tax imposed by section 1600 for the calendar year 1939 shall not be disallowed or reduced by reason of the payment into a State unemployment fund after January 31, 1940, of contributions with respect to services affected by this Act performed during the period July 1, 1939, to December 31, 1939, inclusive, with respect to which services amounts have been paid as contributions under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act [section 351 et seq. of this title] prior to the date of enactment of this Act [Aug. 13, 1940]: Provided, That this subsection shall be applicable only if the contributions with respect to such services are paid into the State unemployment fund before the ninetieth day after the date of enactment of this Act.”