

Regarding rail mergers, what measures has the ICC been able to take or is considering or taking at the present time to reduce the time and effort involved in the handling of a rail merger? It seems that the delays go on indefinitely.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mergers do take considerable time. We are using every effort we possibly can, at the same time retaining due process. This is where the problem is, Mrs. Heckler. But what we are doing more and more now is applying special staff groups to particular merger cases with the idea of assisting, for example, the hearing examiners, making sure they have enough staff, using our economic experts, our accounting experts to assist them in the analysis of the information.

The major merger cases are assigned to individual commissioners—this is recent, within the last year or two—for administrative control, to be sure that time schedules are kept as closely as they can, that there are no unusual delays.

We hope to improve as we go along to the extent that we can, within the Commission, conclude the cases as expeditiously as we can. Of course, after it gets out of the Commission, much of the delay is attributable to actions in the courts. I think in practically all of these cases, they eventually end up in the court somewhere because so much is involved and they have a tremendous impact on the economy.

Mrs. HECKLER. Thank you.

Mr. BROOKS. Thank you very much, Mrs. Heckler.

PART 2. PROGRAM REVIEW

Now, Mr. Chairman, turning to the program breakdown, I would appreciate a brief explanation of what each of the programs is and, briefly, how it is performed. You have four programs. We have already covered general support.

Mr. TIERNEY. That is correct, sir.

Mr. BROOKS. You may want to call on the people who run those programs and give us about 4 or 5 minutes on each one.

A. PROGRAM CATEGORY 1—REGULATION OF CARRIER RATES, PRACTICES, OPERATING AUTHORITIES, AND FINANCE

Mr. TIERNEY. We will start with activity 1, regulation of carrier rates, practices, et cetera.

Mr. BROOKS. That is exhibit F, and it is your program category 1. Without objection, I will put exhibit F in the record.

(Exhibit F follows:)