# POSITION DESCRIPTION

# board member/Chairman of the surface transportation board, Department of transportation

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| **OVERVIEW** |
| Senate Committee | Commerce, Science and Transportation |
| Agency Mission | To ensure a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future |
| Position Overview | Members serve on the Surface Transportation Board, which is an independent adjudicatory and economic-regulatory agency charged by Congress with resolving railroad rate and service disputes and reviewing proposed railroad mergers.[[1]](#endnote-1) |
| Compensation | Board Members: Level IV $155,500 (5 U.S.C. § 5315)Chairman: Level III $165,300 (5 U.S.C. § 5314)[[2]](#endnote-2) |
| Position Reports to | The Surface Transportation Board is an independent agency. Board members serve at the pleasure of the president. The president may remove a member for inefficiency, neglect of duty, or malfeasance in office. (49 U.S.C. 701) |
| **RESPONSIBILITIES** |
| Management Scope | In fiscal 2015, the Surface Transportation Board had a budget of $34 million and 170 employees.[[3]](#endnote-3) |
| Primary Responsibilities | Serves on the Surface Transportation Board, which:* Serves as both an adjudicatory and a regulatory body
* Has jurisdiction over: railroad and service issues, and rail restructuring transactions (mergers, line sales, line construction and line abandonment); certain trucking company, moving van and noncontiguous ocean shipping company rate matters; certain intercity passenger bus company structure, financial and operational matters; and rates and services of certain pipelines not regulated by the Federal Regulatory Commission[[4]](#endnote-4)

The chairman of the board:* Appoints and supervises the officers and employees of the board, other than regular and full-time employees in the immediate offices of another member; this includes attorneys, to provide legal aid and service to the board and its members, and to represent the board in any case in court
* Appoints the heads of offices, with the board’s approval
* Distributes board business among officers and employees, and board offices
* Prepares requests for appropriations for the board and submits those requests to the president and Congress with the board’s prior approval
* Supervises the expenditure of funds allocated by the board for major programs and purposes (49 U.S.C. 701)
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| Strategic Goals and Priorities | [Depends on the policy priorities of the administration] |
| **REQUIREMENTS AND COMPETENCIES** |
| Requirements | Board requirements:* The board consists of three members appointed by the president, with the advice and consent of the Senate
* No more than two members may be appointed from the same political party
* At least two board members must have professional standing and demonstrated knowledge in transportation or transportation regulation, and at least one member must have professional or business experience (including agriculture) in the private sector
* The term of each board member is five years, beginning when the term of his or her predecessor ends; an individual appointed to fill a vacancy that occurs before the appointed predecessor’s term expires, is appointed for the remainder of that term; when a board member’s term ends, he or she may continue to serve until a successor is appointed and qualified, for a period not to exceed one year
* No individual may serve as a board member for more than two terms
* The head of the board is a chairman designated by the president from among the board members (49 U.S.C. 701)
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| Competencies | * Strong communication and interpersonal skills;
* Ability to collaborate
* Ability to work across party lines
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| **PAST APPOINTEES** |
| Ann D. Begeman (2016 to 2017): Staff Director, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation; Professional Staff Member, Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation[[5]](#endnote-5) |
| Daniel R. Elliot III (2015): Associate General Counsel, United Transportation Union[[6]](#endnote-6) |
| Charles D. Nottingham (2009 to 2011): Associate Administrator, Office of Policy and Governmental Affairs, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation[[7]](#endnote-7) |

1. https://www.stb.gov/stb/about/overview.html [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 115-31, May 5, 2017), contains a provision that continues the freeze on the payable pay rates for certain senior political officials at 2013 levels during calendar year 2017. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. OPM [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Leadership Directories [↑](#endnote-ref-7)