



Empire Builder Rules Compilation 2003-2019

Excerpt from TGA Players Handbook (revisions in progress)

Pre-Publication Draft June 2019

About this Draft – a note from the TGA Rules Committee

This is a pre-publication draft compilation of TGA general rules and Empire Builder system tournament rules which have been published over the years. Prior publications have included the TGA Players Handbook from 2003, revised in 2005, and again in 2011, plus the EBI Rules clarifications for ferry movement and half-rate movement published in 2018. Most of these rules have remained consistent since 2003, but there has been some evolution over the years. I've done a few quick edits, but generally the wording herein remains as it was last published.

This document remains a work in progress. The TGA Rules Committee hopes to have a new published handbook, at least including EBI and some other games, by the end of 2019. However there have been several recent EBI questions and ruling requests which are answered by this document. Therefore we are releasing this as is so it can be useful in the meantime, since the 2011 handbook revision is out of date in some ways and is no longer widely available.

We hope that as many of our players and volunteers as possible will read through this document, since even some of our most experienced participants can mis-remember the details.

We are aware that there are many additional EBI clarifications that should be finalized, and that this document needs editing for clarity, organization, wording and format consistency, and gender neutrality. We know that it desperately needs some graphical aids to accompany the novelette of text. It is still a draft.

In some cases we have action items under way to address these. But please understand the TGA is an all-volunteer organization, and these things tend to take much longer than we'd like.

Feedback tells us the FAQ we published with last year's clarifications is very helpful. We have expanded that FAQ within this document and intend to continue doing so to cover a wider range of the EBI rules.

If you have comments, suggestions, or specific questions which this does not address, or if you wish to be involved in occasional rules discussions or help document some of the remaining issues, please speak to a member of the Rules Committee or email Rules@traingamers.com.

Jeff Jackson

TGA Senior Director of Tournament Systems / Rules Committee Chair

About The Puffing Billy[®] Tournament

The Puffing Billy[®] Tournament (PBT) is named after the first patented locomotive. PBTs are sanctioned by the Train Gamers Association (TGA), and are held at conventions all over the country. The goal of the tournament is to encourage the play of train games.

You do not need to be a member of the TGA to participate in the Puffing Billy[®] Tournament, although we certainly encourage you to consider joining. You are not required to participate in the PBT in order to play a train game, or to win an individual train game tournament, but we hope the excitement of the PBT will add to your convention enjoyment. Good Luck!

About the Train Gamers Association

The ongoing purpose of the Train Gamers Association (TGA) is to facilitate and promote the play of train games. We sanction and run Puffing Billy[®] Tournaments (PBTs) at large and small conventions throughout the year. The three major Puffing Billy[®] Tournaments each year are Railcon, Origins, and Gen Con. We are continually working to support tournament conductors so you can always be assured of a quality gaming experience at any TGA-sanctioned PBT.

About this Handbook

Many variants and house rules are in common use in train games, and in some cases published rules are unclear or problematic for competitive play. Our goal is to document the rules that allow for the most fun and equitable tournament gaming experience.

The first edition of this handbook (2003) was the result of more than a year of discussions with players, game designers, and developers. The latest revision contains updates through 2011, and is supplemented by the current year's rules posted on our website and results board. Thanks to everyone who completed a survey, offered suggestions, or took part in discussions over the years to make this document possible. A debt is also owed to TGA volunteers, past and present, who have contributed to the writing found in this handbook.

This handbook is and will continue to be a work in progress. Players and conductors are strongly encouraged to provide feedback and details of situations from any game that are not covered. Please contact the TGA Rules Committee at Rules@traingamers.com.

Note on Word Choices

We have used the words 'he' and 'his' to describe players throughout this document. These words are used in their generic sense, and were chosen for clarity over than the more cumbersome 'he or she' and 'his or her' or the grammatically incorrect 'their'.

"We" and "Our" refer to the TGA Rules Committee, representing the TGA Board and the collective TGA experience since the organization's inception in 1989.

TGA Rules Committee Philosophy

Our goal is to create an enjoyable, fair, competitive environment for all players. Except for teaching games, all games should be played by standard TGA rules, so everyone is playing the same game. We generally play by the game's printed rules unless:

- Printed rules create an unfair or unbalanced competition;
- We have discovered a problem in the rules for competitive play that may have not been anticipated by the designers; or
- We believe a proposed rules change will clearly make a better more strategic game

Generally our philosophical bias is to create a tournament that rewards the best strategic play. We do not use shortened game rules or employ changes to "speed up the game" if the result is a less strategic, more luck-oriented tournament. We believe the player who plays the best strategic game should have the best chance of winning that game. Our rules are designed to optimize for that result, based on the best available data we have.

To that end, our preferred number of players in most train games is four players. If that is not possible we will run a mix of four and three player boards. With rare exceptions we do not run five and six player games. Our data indicate that four and three player games result in the best strategic player having the best chance to win. Five and six player games are exciting, but luck becomes a larger factor in those games, therefore we avoid them.

Time of play is a concern in some games, but we choose not to diminish the quality or of any game or eliminate any of its strategic elements in order to shorten its time of play. We prefer to provide play guidelines and player aids to allow our games to be completed within their scheduled time slots of two, three, or four hours.

General Puffing Billy[®] Tournament Rules

- All games are to be played according to the published rules except for clarifications and exceptions noted in the latest PBT handbook, other official Rules Committee publications, or as directed by the Conductor.
- Variants may only be played if all players agree and the Conductor approves. Note that most variants will NOT be approved by the Conductor.
- Rulings by the Conductors are final. Please do not argue with the Conductors; they are volunteers and are trying to do their best.
- Each player is responsible for ensuring that a legible score sheet is recorded and delivered to the scoring table in a timely fashion. To count, each sheet must include game name, slot played, and each player's name, player number, position and final score.
- Scores on sheets with pre-printed game names will be assumed to be qualifying games. All others will be assumed to be pick-up games unless otherwise designated on the score sheet by the Conductor.
- The tournament scorer may make reasonable efforts to identify and correct obvious scoring errors, but is not obligated or required to do so.

Player Conduct

It should go without saying but: We expect courteous behavior and good sportsmanship from all train gamers at all times. Cheating is any form of circumventing the letter or spirit of the rules of a game or of the Puffing Billy® Tournament. In those rare instances where problems occur that cannot be resolved at the table, please contact a Tournament Conductor immediately.

Given the competitive nature of a tournament we also offer these guidelines to player conduct. We recognize that each player and each game and table will be different, but as a matter of fairness any player has the right to insist these be followed in tournament play.

- Players are expected to be continuously present during the play of any event in which they are participating except during predetermined or agreed upon breaks. Players are responsible for arriving on time. No player may play in more than one game at the same time.
- Players should not be rushed, however all are strongly encouraged to use the time between their turns to plan future moves and decisions, to be prepared to go when their turns come.
- A player may not intentionally engineer a bankruptcy in order to end or leave a game in which he is doing poorly or does not wish to continue. A player may not quit a game before it has finished (except for emergencies), and especially not to play in another PBT event.
- Players may communicate with each other to make suggestions or lobby for a specific action, but only over the board where all present can hear. It is unethical to make secret agreements before or during the game. Suggestions can be made but should be brief, and no player may delay the game trying repeatedly to convince another player to take specific actions or trying to play another player's position for him. Agreements made at the table are never binding.
- Generally, mistakes or oversights may be corrected, but should not be allowed as the result of new information. In some games changes are usually not OK once the next player's turn has begun; in others allowing other players to take their turns while a player finalizes a decision (e.g. upgrading a train in EBI) speeds up the game enough to be worth allowing the latitude.
- **ALWAYS PLAY TO WIN THE GAME.** A player may not take any action for the sole purpose of affecting another player's Puffing Billy® Tournament score or a specific player's chances to win. Paying to run on someone else's line with no justifiable strategic reason is one example. This is considered cheating under PBT rules. Our guideline since 1994 has been *"Always play to maximize your chances (no matter how small) of winning this game"*. Any other type of play is suspect. [2019 NOTE: we are reviewing this guideline]
- Each player has a responsibility to ensure the rules of the game and tournament are followed. Most issues that arise can be resolved at the table, but if you are unable to do so, please suspend the game and find a Conductor promptly. It is almost impossible to correct a situation long after the fact.
- All rulings of the Conductors shall be followed. If a player disagrees with a ruling, he may ask for a second opinion. The first Conductor then will select another Conductor with whom to consult. The two can consult with anyone else they wish and make a joint ruling, but their ruling is final. The goal is to resolve the issue with minimal disruption.
- The Puffing Billy® Tournament Conductor is authorized to take whatever actions he or she deems necessary to resolve situations that arise within the course of a PBT.
- **Most important, have fun!** We're all here because we enjoy this, and we choose to be here.

Empire Builder Style Games

The following general rules apply to the entire Empire Builder family of games. The most recent published rules are in effect, except where noted below.

Preparation for Play

Unless the conductor specifies otherwise, any method to which all players agree may be used to determine which player sits in which position around the table. Any player may insist on randomizing seats. Deal three demand cards to each player. Replace any event cards until all players have three demand cards. Event cards do not take effect and are shuffled back into the deck. Once everyone has three demand cards, the player with the largest single payoff amount on his cards goes first, and play continues clockwise around the table based on seating. Ties for going first are broken by the second highest payoff, third highest payoff, and so forth.

Winning the Game and Final Standings

- A player has met the victory conditions when he has 250 million in cash and the required number of cities connected by contiguous track, at the end of his turn or any other player's turn (this is slightly different from some printed rules). The active player must have drawn cards to replace all loads delivered on the winning turn, and resolved any event cards drawn, ending with three demand cards in his hand. Play continues if necessary to complete the final game turn, finishing with the player who went last during the initial game turn.
- Once any player has achieved victory conditions, the main phase of the game ends after all the players have completed their final game turn regardless of further disaster card effects. Note that the first player to achieve those victory conditions does not necessarily win. Any disaster cards drawn are still resolved and affect all players, but cannot prevent the game from ending. A player who had achieved victory conditions is still deemed to have met those conditions, even if subsequent events reduce his cash below 250 million and/or disconnect his cities. A derailment does not stop a victory.
- Following the final game turn, there is a special build turn described below. The winner is the player who has the most cash AFTER the special build turn, among those who met victory conditions BEFORE the end of the final game turn (before the special build turn).
- If two or more players are tied for any position the score is recorded as a tie. The tiebreaker of extending the game to 300 is *no longer used* in TGA tournament play.
- The following rules to determine order of finish will be used in major Puffing Billy® Tournaments (Railcon, Origins, and Gen Con). A less formal approach may be used at other conventions, as announced by the conductor.
 - After the final game turn, a special track building turn will occur. Starting with the first player to have achieved victory conditions, each player who does not have his required major cities connected (according to the victory conditions of the specific game) must spend up to 20 million to build track to make those connections. Such building can only be done to connect required cities, and must be done by the least expensive route available (player's choice if the costs are the same). If a player has already connected his required cities, or cannot connect for 20 million or less, then he builds nothing during this turn. All event cards are discarded at the end of the final game turn, so they do not affect this special build turn.

- After this special build turn, final positions (other than first place) are determined by cash, first among players who have their required cities connected, then among players who do not. This means all players who have their required cities connected will finish ahead of any players who do not.
- In Iron Dragon, if the Rainbow Bridge was up when victory conditions were first achieved, the bridge is considered to be up for the purpose of city connections in this special build turn, even if the Wizard's Strike was drawn later in the final game turn.
- If a game will not be finished by the end of the allotted time period, the final game turn is defined by time rather than victory conditions, but otherwise final standings are determined as in a completed game. At a predetermined time (usually around 10 minutes before the end of the time slot), play continues to complete the final game turn, finishing with the player who went last during the initial game turn. Then the special build turn (described above) occurs, and final positions (including first place) are determined by cash, first among players who have their required cities connected, then among players who do not.

Event Cards

- When an event card is drawn it is resolved immediately, before another card is drawn. Cards are drawn one at a time, and it is improper for the drawing player to look at any cards that come after the event card before resolving the event. E.g. if the drawing player is required to lose a load, he must decide which load to drop without knowledge of cards not yet drawn.
- When the drawing player must lose a turn, he continues drawing cards until he has three demands cards, then forfeits the remainder of the present turn plus the entire next turn.
- All major and minor city mileposts are considered to be clear mileposts except for major city mileposts that are specifically drawn as mountains.
- When counting distance from a minor city, use the city milepost as 'zero' and count the dot next to the city as 'one'. From a regular-shaped major city, the city center point is 'zero' and the milepost next to the city center is 'one'. From a larger major city, count the closest interior city milepost as 'zero'. (ANY exterior major city milepost can be 'one'.) From a geographic feature, the actual coastline, volcano, etc. is 'zero' and the nearest dot counts as 'one', using the shortest distance to determine the effect of the event. Do not artificially 'insert' mileposts into lakes or ocean inlets when counting.
- When an event allows no movement in a specific type of milepost, it means that a player cannot move onto or from an affected milepost.
- **2019 NOTE: THIS RULE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY LATER UPDATES.—Half rate movement can be played either of two ways. *Players at the table should decide before the game begins which approach they will use:***
 - ~~1. By the rules a train beginning its turn in an affected area moves at half its normal rate for the entire turn, and a train entering an affected area moves at half rate for the remainder of its turn—even if it moves out of the defined disaster area during the turn. This is the default ruling if all players cannot agree.~~
 - ~~2. Many players play an unpublished variant in which half rate movement begins with the move onto the first affected milepost and ends with the move onto the last affected milepost, with full movement resuming with the first step onto a milepost outside of the affected area. Under this variant it is possible to change back and forth between full and half rate movement during the same turn.~~

Track Building

- To determine whether proposed track would cross a river, lake or ocean inlet, the rules should be checked first as they may clarify the build. If they do not, lay a straightedge along the proposed build between the center points of each dot -- if the blue river, lake or ocean is clearly visible, a bridge must be built. If there is doubt, err on the side of no bridge required.
- Once a player has built to a ferry port, he may build from the opposite ferry port at no additional cost (i.e. paying only the normal cost for the track segment). There is no free segment build.
- Track once built does not permanently guarantee right-of-way. If track is destroyed by an event, the original building player is allowed one full build turns from the end of the disaster to rebuild his original track, after which it may be rebuilt by any player (following normal build rules). If a player's only route into a city is erased, he is no longer connected to that city.
- No player may build track that would block other players from connecting to all major cities.
- Players may not build track solely to disrupt other players' track building. This is often called 'zippering' and it is expressly forbidden during tournament play. Note that building to a city is always legitimate even if the player has no demand card for it. The Conductor is the final arbiter of the legitimacy of any build.
- Track need not be contiguous. A player may build from his own track or from any major city. Track from different major cities need not connect. A player may build from any major city (connected or not) at normal cost, but only twice per turn.
- Building two different track segments out of a single major city (even the same major city milepost) counts as the player's two major city builds for that turn.

Movement

- Always round up when moving at half-rate, e.g. a freight train with nine movement may move five mileposts.
- When crossing a ferry the first movement step is onto the ferry milepost across the water from where the player started.
- When disaster prevents ferry movement, a player may not move onto a ferry port in order to continue ferry movement on the far side the next turn. However the ferry port may be used as a normal movement dot. [THIS IS CLARIFIED LATER IN THE DOCUMENT]
- A player may not voluntarily turn around except on a city milepost or ferry port.
- **2019 NOTE: THIS RULE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY LATER UPDATES.—Ferry ownership can be played either of two ways. Players at the table should decide before the game begins which approach they will use:**
 1. ~~Ferries do not exist until someone builds them, and a ferry route is owned by the building player just like track. You must pay to ride any ferry you have not built, even if you do not run on any drawn track other than your own. This is the default.~~
 2. ~~Many players play a variant where they consider ferries to be public domain, and treat them like major city track segments. Under this variant you only pay another player if you ride his drawn track on that turn—e.g. in Aussie Rails if you jump from Tasmania to Melbourne and move from Melbourne on your own track you do not pay to ride the ferry even though you have not built it.~~

General EBI Notes

- Once the tax card has been turned up, all money is public knowledge for the rest of the game. Until that time, money can be kept private if desired.
- Dumping cards in lieu of building during the initial building phase is allowed during tournament play. Event cards drawn during this phase are discarded without taking effect. If the tax card is drawn during this phase, money instantly becomes and remains public, but the tax is not assessed. If another card with a lasting effect is drawn (e.g. Rainy Season, Rainbow Bridge) the effect takes place immediately. This clarification is contrary to some written rules but avoids a potentially serious early game imbalance.
- The Mercy Rule or 'borrowing' is not allowed during tournament play even if explicitly allowed by the rules of the Empire Builder variants. However the usual prohibition against running on someone's line for no reason can be relaxed if another player wishes to be charitable to a stuck player.
- In the absence of a specific correction, if there is an error on a card such that the load name and picture do not match, the printed name takes precedence.

Proper Play and Etiquette

- Players should take their turns in order, waiting for the previous player to complete his entire turn before beginning.
- Players should verbally count the accumulating costs as they build track.
- Players should count out loud as they move their pawns from dot to dot. It is not proper in a PBT to 'jump' to the end of the move, count by twos, or move in any fashion other than one dot at a time, in a manner that is easily seen and verified by all other players.
- The above rules of proper play may be relaxed by common agreement, but any player has the right to insist the rules be followed strictly.
- Each player should be ready to move when his turn comes, using the time while others are moving to plan his next turns.
- Demand cards and loads on board are always public knowledge, and should be displayed in such a way as to be easily visible to all players, without covering key information.
- When a player loses a turn and a load, it is a recommended practice that he place the lost load chit beneath his train marker on the board to signify that he has not yet lost his turn, then remove it as he loses his turn.
- Once money is public (after the tax card has been drawn), it is good etiquette to keep money in the largest possible bills, and spread out in such a way as to be easily visible to all players.
- In tournament play it is unfair to expect one player to act as both changer of money and distributor of load chits. Multiple players should help with these tasks where possible, and all should be aware of when a player is thinking (e.g. after drawing new cards) and try not to interrupt him with a banking task.
- Corrections can be made within a player's turn or soon after, but generally not after a card has been drawn or other relevant new information is available. In EBI most corrections can be made until the player's NEXT turn has started, and obvious oversights such as failing to pick up a non-speculative load that he clearly intended to get can be fixed even later. As a guideline, retroactive changes should not be allowed if they are based on information revealed since the original decision was made. The table should discuss how strictly they wish to play before each game begins. Ask a conductor for guidance if needed.

Empire Builder System Rules Clarifications 2018



The TGA Rules Committee has worked for the past few years to clarify EBI rules around ferries and half-rate movement, for which there have been numerous varying interpretations over the last 35 years. The clear consensus from TGA members was that we needed one set of rules to be played in all TGA-run games. As a result, here are the rules that will be used beginning at Origins 2018. As usual these changes will be reviewed at the end of this year.

NOTE: This is the one page highlight version of the rules. Much more detail and an FAQ will follow in the upcoming pages. Ask a TGA volunteer if you want more information.

THERE IS NO LONGER ANY PRE-GAME DISCUSSION. ALL GAMES ARE PLAYED BY THESE RULES.

FERRY MOVEMENT

- Ferry movement is a TWO-TURN process. During events which prohibit “ferry movement” you may not stage your train on an affected ferry post OR use that ferry to cross the water.
- When your train ends its movement for the turn on a ferry port milepost, it is AUTOMATICALLY assumed to be staged for ferry movement, UNLESS you specifically announce that the train is “NOT STAGED”.
- Having staged your train on your previous movement turn, you have two options for your next movement turn, either of which will be at half rate (rounded up):
 - Move at half rate beginning with the ferry port on the opposite side of the water
 - Move at half rate beginning with the ferry port on the same side of the water
- If your train is on a ferry milepost but NOT STAGED, you are not exposed to being derailed by a Gale event, and you have two options on your next movement turn:
 - Use all your movement to stage your train for the ferry
 - Leave using normal movement (full rate) on the same side of the water
- While sitting on a ferry port, discarding and replacing your cards or losing a turn to an event does not affect your status (staged or not staged) on the ferry
- You may turn around on any ferry port, with or without stopping. A port is a type of city.
- If you have not built a ferry line, you MUST pay to use that ferry, whether or not you ride on that player’s drawn track. If more than one player has built the ferry you choose which one to pay, and you may pay a different player from the one you rode into the port to stage.

EVENT EFFECTS THAT INCLUDE HALF RATE MOVEMENT

- To determine which dots are affected, use the geographical feature or city milepost (center milepost of a major city) as “zero” and count from there
- Half rate movement begins with your FIRST step TO OR FROM an affected milepost
- Once affected, ALL remaining movement until the end of the current turn is at half rate
- House rules or variants which allow a train to increase speed from half rate to full rate in the middle of a movement turn are no longer used in TGA play



EBI RULES INTERPRETATION DETAIL and FAQ rev June 2019

FERRIES

- (addition to the Board/Map section of the rules): Each city location (including all major city mileposts) contains the infrastructure necessary to load and unload goods. A ferry port is a special type of city milepost which contains additional infrastructure to stage a train in preparation for loading onto a ferry, and to facilitate the loading. A milepost which is both a ferry port AND a city milepost contains the infrastructure to do all of the above.
- (addition to the Building Railroads section of the rules): When track is drawn which connects to any city milepost (small, medium, major, or ferry), that track is connected to the city's infrastructure. ALL track connected to the same milepost is connected to the same, common infrastructure.
- (addition to the Using a Ferry section of the rules): When a player moves onto a ferry milepost and stops moving for the turn, the train has automatically moved into the staging area of the port's infrastructure, UNLESS the player specifically announces that the train is not staged, or an Event that prohibits ferry movement is in effect.
- From the staged area, on the player's NEXT movement turn the train can leave in one of two ways. One option is to board any connected ferry line and ride it across the water, moving at half rate beginning with the ferry port on the opposite side. The second option is to leave the staging area and be loaded onto any connected track on the same side of the water, moving at half rate beginning with the ferry port on the SAME side of the water.
- If the player moved onto a ferry milepost but did NOT stage the train, on the next movement turn the train can either leave on the same side of the water at full rate, or use its movement to stage the train.
- (modification of the Gale Events & Ferry Ports subsection of the rules): In an area affected by a Gale event, each train that is STAGED on a ferry port is derailed and loses one turn and one load. [Note that a train which is sitting on a ferry milepost but is NOT staged is NOT derailed, but cannot be staged while the event is in effect.]

HALF RATE MOVEMENT

- (addition to the Event Card Effects, Half Rate section of the rules): ...the train's remaining movement is halved, rounding all fractions up, beginning with the first movement step TO OR FROM a milepost which is in the affected area.

FAQ on the TGA Policy Change – rev May 2018

1. *Why is the TGA taking away the option to play by Area of Effect and Public Ferries?* The simple answer is TGA policy is to play by actual rules unless a change demonstrably improves the game, which these do not. The more complete answer is allowing these house rules has created a great deal of confusion, anger, and frustration over the past 30 years. We have lost players and been accused of allowing our favorite players to “cheat” by letting them make up rules. This has also resulted in games routinely being played by different rules from one table to the next, and even among the players sitting around the same table. Trying to have each table decide how to play has not solved the problem, and has created new types of anger and frustration. The strongest feedback the Rules Committee received over the past two years is that we need to eliminate the pre-game discussions and define one standard set of rules for all EBI games, which we have done.
2. *Why now?* In perfect hindsight it would have been better to teach everyone the actual rules 30+ years ago and get everyone to play that way from the beginning... but that didn't happen. We've reached a point where trying to keep everyone happy is simply not working, so we feel we need to impose a standard set of rules and work through whatever difficulties the transition brings.
3. *If everyone at the table wants to be play by a variant like Area of Effect, is that still allowed in the TGA?* At a TGA Major tournament (Origins, Gen Con, Railcon) the answer is NO. While we will not have Volunteers and Conductors police everyone's play, we are asking all our regular players to support this change to make the transition as smooth as possible. You may need to remind each other of the new rules until everyone gets used to it, or call a Conductor to assist if needed.
4. *Will these rules be enforced at all TGA-sanctioned events?* At any TGA-sanctioned Regional event we encourage the use of standard TGA rules to avoid confusion. However, the local conductor may decide to run their EBI tournament using any variant or house rule (No Dump, Area of Affect, Circus, Mercy, Field Warehousing) or to ignore a published TGA rules change (Equal Turns, Final Special Build), as long as any rules change or variant is clearly announced and communicated to all players before any game begins. If you are attending a Regional we suggest you ask the conductor if rules are not clearly posted or announced.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules – rev June 2019

NOTE: This is a work in progress, which will grow to include all existing TGA EBI clarifications.

5. *Can I turn around on a ferry port without stopping or getting on the ferry?* YES. A ferry is a type of city and you can turn around there as in any city. [This is the original published rule from the first editions of Eurorails and Nippon.] If your last movement step is onto the ferry city and you intend to turn around on the next movement turn, you must announce that you have NOT staged your train for the ferry. If you move in and out of the ferry on the same turn, no announcement is needed.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules rev June 2019 – Continued

6. *Can I ride one player's track into the ferry port, then switch to a different player's ferry to cross the water?* YES. See the clarifications on the board and track building rules. ALL track and ALL ferries built to a port city are connected to the same common port infrastructure. Any connected track can get you to the port staging area, and any connected ferry can load your train and carry it across.
7. *If I am sitting on a ferry port which I have not built and do not move, do I have to pay someone for that turn?* NO. If your train does not move at all, you do not pay, anywhere on the board.
8. *I arrive in Belfast, stage my train for the ferry, then upgrade to a Superfreight. Can I pick up a load of potatoes to fill the train next turn before I leave?* YES. The port infrastructure is connected to the city infrastructure for loading and unloading goods. Note that the same ruling would apply if you were staged for the ferry and discarded your cards last turn, or if you were derailed and lost your previous turn.
9. *I am sitting on a ferry port which I have not built and I did NOT (or could not) stage the train for the ferry on my previous turn. All I do on this turn is stage the train. Have I actually moved and do I have to pay for it?* Technically, yes you have moved (staging occurs during train movement), but NO you do not have to pay for this turn. All of your movement occurred within the city and its existing infrastructure; you did NOT move on any line (track or ferry) which was built by another player.
10. *Can I stage to a ferry port where the ferry line I plan to use is not yet built?* YES. As long as track exists into the port (e.g. major city track or another player's track) you could move into the port and stage the train, THEN build the ferry line that turn, THEN use the newly built ferry the following turn.
11. *How do you explain that the movement lost to stage the ferry can be anywhere from 0 to 12 pips?* If you time your arrival at the ferry port when there is no one waiting you can be staged quickly, but sometimes you wait in a queue.
12. *Why do I need to move at half rate if I stay on the same side of the water?* The staging area is intended for trains and other items waiting to load the ferry. If you stage then change your mind about crossing, you are the lowest priority for being unloaded and returned to the railroad track at the other end of the infrastructure.
13. *Are these rules completely realistic for real world railroad operations?* No. The goal is not a perfect simulation of reality. Otherwise it would take much longer to ferry from Newcastle to Esbjerg that it does to cross the English Channel, and movement would be slower through mountains, and you would slow down to enter a city, load and unload goods, or pass another train. Half rate movement is used in several different ways in EBI game play to simulate a situation where the train is delayed. Realistically some delays would be longer than others, but the game keeps it simple such that you either move at full rate or half rate.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules rev June 2019 – Continued

14. *If I am moving at half rate as I depart the ferry and during that turn I move into an area where an Event requires half rate movement, am I now supposed to move at half of half, or one-quarter rate?* NO. The train can be at full rate under normal conditions, half rate during any delay or combination of delays, or not allowed to move at all. There are no other speeds.
15. *Is the Chunnel a special type of ferry which is affected by a Gale? Am I derailed if I am sitting on a Chunnel milepost when the Gale hits? If not, do I move at half rate on the Chunnel mileposts?* NO, NO, and MAYBE. The rules clearly state that the Chunnel is not affected by a Gale event, therefore you are not derailed in the Chunnel. The three Chunnel mileposts are not affected dots, but both ends are connected to dots which would be affected. If you start a turn on a Chunnel milepost you would move at full rate until the first step which is TO OR FROM an affected dot (presumably as you leave the Chunnel). However if you do not begin on a Chunnel milepost, your train must have moved TO OR FROM an affected dot in order to reach the Chunnel, thus you would continue at half rate for the rest of your turn as per standard rules.
16. *Can I turn around on the Chunnel?* NO. There is no city on the Chunnel.
17. *How do these clarifications affect when I pay in Australian Rails to move to and from Hobart on someone else's ferry?* You **do not** pay to get to the Melbourne ferry port and stage the train on Turn 1 (assuming you did not have to pay to get to Melbourne). On Turn 2 you **would** pay someone for their ferry and track to get to Hobart and back to the ferry. On Turn 3 you **would** pay someone for use of their ferry back to Melbourne.
18. *What's the logic behind that Melbourne ruling? **A ferry is part of the building player's track.*** The city and ferry loading infrastructures exist as part of the starting board. The ferry line track does not exist until someone builds it. You never pay to use anything which exist as part of the starting board. You always pay to use something which another player built.
19. *Do these ferry clarifications change the way Taiwan Container Movement works in China Rails?* No, but the concepts are similar. The mainland ports contain the infrastructure to link to a container which is compatible with the Taiwan rails. Arriving and ending a movement turn in a port automatically stages the train for the container link, giving the option to either drop off OR pick up from Taiwan at the beginning of the next turn.
20. *Is there a definitive TGA reference for exactly where on each map each disaster card affects?* It is on the Rules Committee wish list, but such a reference does not exist today. We plan to create that, at least for Eurorails, as we have the volunteer resources to do so. Mayfair never addressed this fully, and we know they gave contradictory rulings at times.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules rev June 2019 – Continued

21. *In particular, how far do the various Oceans and Seas extend for disasters in Eurorails?*

Which ferries are affected by the North and Atlantic Sea gale events? One at a time:

- a. North / Baltic: Mayfair specified in the latest version that the boundary between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea is the ferry south of Copenhagen. Map-toting geography whizzes can argue that the Scandinavian waters should be the Skaggerak and Kattegat, and that several Eurorails ferries are neither in the North nor Baltic Sea. But this is a case where TGA can't justify overruling the Mayfair definition, as we can presume their intent was in part a game play feature to have all ferries subject to a gale disaster. The official TGA rule for gale effect derailments is EVERY FERRY ON THE BOARD is affected by the North / Irish / English disaster card. For counting purposes the North Sea includes any coastline point from the Malmo-Sassnitz ferry ports to the north or west.
- b. English Channel / Atlantic: Some references call the English Channel part of the Atlantic Ocean, but for TGA purposes we make the distinction because the Eurorails event cards do. The official ruling is the western edge of the English Channel is a line between the extreme western dot in southern England (due west from Plymouth) to the northwesternmost dot in France (six dots northwest from Nantes). We do not define the eastern edge where the English Channel merges into the North Sea, or any other boundaries that do not matter for game play.
- c. Irish Sea / Atlantic. Again, some books will call the Irish Sea an arm of the Atlantic but we must distinguish for game play. The southwestern edge of the Irish Sea is a line from the extreme western dot in southern England (due west from Plymouth) to the mountain at the southwestern tip of Ireland (two movement steps from Cork, to the west southwest). To define the northern edge of the Irish Sea, start from the dot which is two pips northwest of Belfast and draw a line to the dot which is two pips northwest of Glasgow.
- d. Atlantic Northern Edge. Many references indicate that the Atlantic should extend across the northern coast of Ireland to connect with the Irish Sea. But this complicates game play to the extent that the TGA definition, for Eurorails disaster purposes, is the Atlantic ends at the extreme northwestern dot in Ireland (from Dublin, move one pip west then five pips northwest)
- e. Atlantic / Mediterranean. The boundary between these two seas is the extreme southwestern dot in Spain (not Portugal). This dot is three movement steps from Sevilla to the south and slightly west. Note that this definition means a train sitting in Sevilla IS affected by both Atlantic and Mediterranean gales.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules rev June 2019 – Continued

22. *Does the Atlantic Ocean Gale disrupt any ferry movements, or cause players sitting on any ferry ports to be derailed?* NO. Valid geographical arguments can be made that an Atlantic gale should affect the Belfast-Stranraer ferry and/or the Plymouth-Cherbourg ferry. But to simplify game play we have defined those ferries as unaffected by the Atlantic gale. Note that the Atlantic gale card does not mention ferries as the North Sea gale card does. Plus it is simpler to define the rule as North/Irish/English gale affects ALL ferries on the map, and no other gales disrupt any ferry movement.
23. *In China Rails, do Storms at Sea derail a train sitting on the Dalian ferry or any of the Taiwan ports?* NO, unlike Eurorails the rules do not include derailment. However, just like ferry movement, Container Movement is a two-turn process. That means any event (Storm or Strike) which suspends Container Movement stops you from staging OR using the container.
24. *China Rails clarification: If I arrived and staged in the Hong Kong port last turn, can I pick up a load at the start of this turn, then deliver it to Hong Kong, then pick up a replacement load from Taiwan, then leave, all on this turn? (I haven't moved.)* No. You get one container at the beginning of the turn with which you can pick up OR deliver as many goods as you can. In order to make the delivery in Hong Kong, you had to begin the normal movement phase of your turn. You could of course make the delivery then immediately restage.
25. *In Martian Rails, certain cards seem to be worded in a way that contradicts the standard EBI rules (e.g. Sands of Mars does not follow the half rate movement rule). Which one applies?* In any EBI game, the card's specific instructions take precedence over general rules. In the case of Martian, the designer intended some events to work differently from other EBI games. The card wording makes that intent very clear and should be followed as written.
26. *Rules say to determine affected dots, use the major city center milepost as "zero" and count from there. What is the center of an irregular shaped city like Tokyo?* Similar to a coastline, use whichever interior milepost gives the shortest distance to the dot you are checking.
27. *If a disaster prohibits building or movement in "mountains", can I build or move in an Alpine milepost?* NO. An alpine is an extra large mountain for these purposes, so if snow is disrupting mountains in an area the alps in the same area are equally affected.
28. *When an event is preventing all movement in mountains, if I start on a clear milepost within the affected area, am I allowed to take my first step ONTO a mountain that is OUTSIDE of the affected area?* YES, but assuming the event called for half-rate movement on clear mileposts your entire turn would be at half rate because you started within the area.
29. *Under TGA tournament rules (which are different from Mayfair rules), I understand that events drawn during the initial build phase are discarded without effect, EXCEPT for permanent effects like Rainbow bridge and the public money element of the tax card. Are bonus cards, like the Irish Economy Booming card a permanent effect or a discard without effect?* Discard without effect. All cards which are one time use, or which expire after a known time frame fall into this category.

FAQ on EBI Game Rules rev June 2019 – Continued

30. *How are ties resolved in EBI games?* The TGA does NOT use Mayfair's tie-breaker. We tried it for a while but we generally don't like tie-breakers which extend the game length, and the potential for someone who was not initially tied for the win to become the eventual winner was problematic too. Effective in 2011 we changed the rule to be ties are recorded as ties, for any position including first place. You may want to read other TGA rules to understand how ties affect various tournament situations.
31. *The new Iron Dragon release has several rules which are confusing. Has the TGA addressed those?* We have done a first pass clarification of issues we found with the newest edition, which is documented separately. We will continue to review and expand when we can.
32. *Why doesn't the first player to achieve victory conditions always win? I thought that was the official rule.* This is a rule the TGA changed in the 1990s, when we determined that allowing "equal turns" made for a more balanced tournament game. If two or more players meet victory conditions during the final round, the one who finishes with the most cash wins, not necessarily the first one. You are correct that this has evolved in the published Mayfair rules, from no mention of Equal Turns, to listing Equal Turns as a variant or tournament rule, to Equal Turns now being the standard published "How to Win" rule.
33. *Can I meet victory conditions on someone else's turn?* YES. Technically you check for victory conditions for all players at the end of each player's turn. If Player C is sitting at 248 with connected cities, and Player D pays her \$4, Player C wins at the end of Player D's turn.
34. *Do I win if I get over 250 with my cities connected, but then my cities get disconnected by a flood? Does it matter whether I have the money to rebuild and still be over 250?* Victory conditions can only occur at the END of a turn. So if the flood occurred during the SAME PLAYER's turn in which you went over 250, then you have not met the conditions, because you were not connected with 250 at the end of that turn. However, if you met conditions at the end of a turn and the flood occurred during a different player's turn (while completing the Equal Turns) then you have still met victory conditions. This remains true even if rebuilding your necessary bridges during the Special Build Turn brings your cash below 250.
35. *Player A hits 252 with his cities connected and declares victory conditions. Player B goes next and make a delivery to hit 274, but pulls a flood that disconnects her cities. No one else hits 250. In the special build turn Player B rebuilds her bridge to be connected, ending with 271. Player A still has 252. Who wins and why?* Player A - he is the only player who met victory conditions at the end of a turn DURING the game. Think of the Special Build Turn as part of the scoring phase, which occurs AFTER the game ends. The purpose of the special build is to correct the money for more equitable positions and scores. To win, a player must have met victory conditions at the END of someone's turn during the final game turn.