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Federal Railroad Administration Announces Landmark Achievement with Full Implementation of Positive Train Control

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced today that positive train control (PTC) technology is in operation on all 57,536 required freight and passenger railroad route miles, prior to the statutory deadline of December 31, 2020, set by Congress. In addition, as required, FRA has certified that each host railroad's PTC system complies with the technical requirements for PTC systems. Furthermore, railroads have reported that interoperability has been achieved between each applicable host and tenant railroad that operates on PTC-governed main lines.

"Achieving 100 percent PTC implementation is a tremendous accomplishment and reflects the Department's top priorities – safety, innovation, and infrastructure," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

PTC systems are designed to prevent train-to-train collisions, over-speed derailments, incursions into established work zones, and movements of trains through switches left in the wrong position. Today's announcement is the culmination of over a decade of sustained and direct engagement and collaboration among FRA and the 41 railroads subject to the statutory mandate, including seven Class I railroads, Amtrak, 28 commuter railroads, and 5 other freight railroads that host regularly scheduled intercity or commuter rail passenger service. This accomplishment encompasses thousands of hours of testing and deployment, innovative technological solutions, and a tremendous amount of coordination among nearly 100 host and tenant railroads, railroad associations, material suppliers, and service providers.

"On behalf of extraordinary professionals at FRA and myself, I congratulate the railroads, particularly their frontline workers, as well as PTC system suppliers and vendors on this transformative accomplishment," said FRA Administrator Ronald L. Batory. "Furthermore, many industry associations, including the Association of American Railroads, American Short Line and Regional

Railroad Association, American Public Transportation Association, Commuter Rail Coalition, National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association, Railway Supply Institute, and Railway Systems Suppliers, have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to supporting this unprecedented undertaking.”

Under the leadership of Secretary Chao and Administrator Batory, key FRA personnel commenced a series of highly focused and inclusive consultations intended to enable, facilitate, and expedite railroads’ full implementation of this mandated technology (see: [PTC-related Outreach and Communication with the Industry](#)). FRA’s PTC experts across the country maintained continuous communication with railroads to provide technical assistance throughout the testing process.

Batory added: “PTC is a critical piece and new dimension of safety in the railroad industry, but it does not take the place of the men and women who operate and maintain freight and passenger trains. At its core, PTC is a risk reduction system that will make a safe industry even safer, and provide a solid foundation upon which additional safety improvements will be realized.”

The Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA) mandated the implementation of PTC systems on Class I railroads’ main lines over which five million or more gross tons of annual traffic and certain hazardous materials are transported, and on any main lines over which intercity or commuter rail passenger transportation is regularly provided. RSIA and FRA’s implementing regulations also require PTC systems to be interoperable, meaning that the locomotives of host and tenant railroads operating on the same main line must communicate with and respond to the PTC system, including during uninterrupted movements over property boundaries.

Finally, the Department of Transportation has supported full and timely implementation of PTC technology by providing approximately \$3.4 billion in grant and loan funding to support railroads and other entities that sought Federal financial assistance for that purpose. For additional information, please visit <https://www.fra.dot.gov/ptc>. To view related FRA correspondence with affected railroads, visit railroads’ PTC dockets available at <https://railroads.dot.gov/train-control/ptc/ptc-annual-and-quarterly-reports>.

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