



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

MAR 30 2010

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Section 154 of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010 (Pub. L. 111-117) requires the Federal Railroad Administrator to "submit a quarterly report on April 1, 2010, and quarterly reports thereafter, to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations detailing the Administrator's efforts at improving the on-time performance of Amtrak intercity rail service operating on non-Amtrak owned property. Such reports shall compare the most recent actual on-time performance data to pre-established on-time performance goals that the Administrator shall set for each rail service, identified by route. Such reports shall also include whatever other information and data regarding the on-time performance of Amtrak trains the Administrator deems to be appropriate."

I am pleased to submit the report in accordance with this requirement. I hope that the information contained in the enclosed report will assist the Committee in its work.

Identical letters have been sent to the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Appropriations.

Sincerely,

Joseph C. Szabo

Enclosures

April 1, 2010

April 2010 Report on Amtrak On-Time Performance
Submitted by the Federal Railroad Administrator
Under Section 154 of Pub. L. 111-117

This report includes two sections: (1) an update on recent Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) efforts to catalyze improvements in Amtrak's on-time performance (OTP); and (2) in keeping with the FRA's January 1, 2010 OTP report, an update on Amtrak OTP results and performance against FRA-established goals.

(1) OTP Improvement Highlights through February Fiscal Year 2010

Southeast Corridor: In recent months, Amtrak has encountered mixed results from the Southeast (I-95) Corridor Performance Improvement Plan, which the FRA required of Amtrak management as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Grant Agreement between the FRA and Amtrak. In December 2009, CSX reduced the average minutes of slow orders experienced by Amtrak trains by 11 minutes; however, during the same period, freight train interference and other meet and pass delays increased by an average of 12 minutes compared to the previous year. The *Auto Train*, which had the highest endpoint OTP among Amtrak's long-distance trains in FY 2009, has an OTP in FY 2010 through February almost six percentage-points lower than the previous year. Despite this decline in performance, the *Auto Train* remains among the top third of long distance trains in terms of on-time arrivals. The *Palmetto*, *Carolinian*, and *Silver Meteor* have also experienced year-over-year declines in their endpoint OTP through February FY 2010 (decreases of 6, 11, and 12 percentage points respectively); however, the *Silver Star* is just under an on-time arrival percent of 80, which is a 7.5 percentage-point improvement over the previous year.

Chicago-St. Louis Corridor: The Union Pacific (UP) Railroad and Amtrak continue to advance the Performance Improvement Plan for the UP's portion of the Chicago – St. Louis corridor. The focus on the corridor has contributed to significant OTP improvements for Amtrak trains. For example, the endpoint OTP for the Chicago – St. Louis *Lincoln Service* was 76.1 percent in FY 2010 through February, which year-over-year, is a 15 percentage-point improvement. Recent action items completed by UP to improve Amtrak performance on this corridor have included the elimination of stop and flag orders due to rusty rail and the reduction of other slow orders along the railroad. In upcoming months, UP plans to make improvements to the dispatching and replace a rail line crossing on the corridor. Amtrak has also contributed to the performance improvement on this route by reducing mechanical delays and improving the passenger boarding procedures.

Other Recent OTP Developments: In 2010 Amtrak is incorporating its own ongoing route improvement initiative into the collaborative Performance Improvement Plans, which will heighten the focus of the performance improvement effort. Performance Improvement Plans developed in 2010 will focus on the five poorest-performing long-distance routes to identify and implement changes where possible.

While Performance Improvement Plans between Amtrak and host freight railroads continue to move forward, the advancement of identified action items across Amtrak's network is expected

to accelerate upon implementation of the Section 207 Metrics and Standards under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). Amtrak and FRA developed and published preliminary metrics and standards for Amtrak's performance, which were released for public comment, and have collaborated on a revised document that is awaiting final approval. Publication will follow that approval.

(2) Goals and Route Performance

Attachment A contains updated OTP statistics for all Amtrak routes for FY 2010 through February. As the attachment illustrates, slightly over half of the routes (23) have had improvements in OTP (in terms of both improved percent on-time and no decrease in effective speed) through February 2010. Of those routes experiencing OTP improvement, a total of 13 (six corridor-type and seven long-distance trains) are meeting, or are surpassing, their FRA-defined OTP target for FY 2010.

The on-time performance across the entire Amtrak system through February of FY 2010 was 81.1 percent, an increase of 3.7 percentage points over the previous year. Amtrak's short distance routes outside the Northeast Corridor (i.e. "Other Corridor Services") experienced a 7.1 percentage-point increase year-over-year (for an average endpoint OTP of 83 percent) while the long-distance trains experienced a 6.6 percentage-point increase over the previous year (for an average endpoint OTP of 78 percent). Further highlighting these fiscal year improvements, compared to the previous year, all but two of Amtrak's routes experienced an increase in endpoint OTP and almost two-thirds have had endpoint OTP increases of ten percentage points or greater.

Considerable momentum for improving Amtrak's OTP was achieved in FY 2009 and notable OTP improvements continue to be made across the Amtrak system in FY 2010. This momentum can only be helped by further cooperation between Amtrak and the freight railroads, the forthcoming publication and implementation of the PRIIA Section 207 Metrics and Standards, and the implementation of recently selected State-sponsored investments under the FRA's ongoing High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program.

Attachment A
Amtrak On-Time Performance for FY 2010
Year-to-Date Totals through February

	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress	Test 1: Higher Percent On Time YTD - February 2010 vs. YTD - February 2009				Test 2: Constant or Better Effective Speed
		FY10 % On Time	% Change from FY09	Proposed Target for FY10	% Variance from FY10 Target	Change in MPH from October 2007 Baseline
<i>Northeast Corridor Service (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 95%)</i>						
Acela		81.0%	(4.1%)	92.1%	(11.1%)	(1.3)
Regional Service		75.1%	(2.4%)	88.2%	(13.1%)	(1.5)
<i>Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2010: 80%)</i>						
Adirondack	✓	72.5%	10.3%	80.0%	(7.5%)	2.5
Blue Water	✓	67.5%	26.9%	80.0%	(12.5%)	1.8
Capitols	✓	92.1%	0.5%	83.8%	8.3%	1.6
Carolinian		57.0%	(11.0%)	80.0%	(23.0%)	2.0
Cascades	✓	72.6%	5.2%	80.0%	(7.4%)	0.7
Downeaster	✓	83.6%	20.9%	85.2%	(1.6%)	0.1
Empire Service		86.6%	6.2%	82.7%	3.9%	(0.9)
Ethan Allen Express		82.8%	26.3%	80.0%	2.8%	(0.2)
Heartland Flyer	✓	90.7%	16.6%	80.0%	10.7%	5.3
Hiawatha		90.3%	6.6%	89.7%	0.6%	(0.1)
Hoosier State	✓	75.0%	32.8%	80.0%	(5.0%)	1.9
Illini		45.4%	(20.5%)	81.6%	(36.1%)	(1.3)
Illinois Zephyr	✓	94.0%	13.5%	80.1%	13.9%	2.2
Keystone		83.6%	(3.9%)	88.1%	(4.5%)	(0.4)
Lincoln Service	✓	76.1%	14.7%	80.0%	(3.9%)	2.4
Maple Leaf	✓	79.5%	24.8%	80.0%	(0.5%)	2.0
Missouri Services	✓	93.0%	42.5%	80.0%	13.0%	7.0
Pacific Surfliner		80.7%	(0.9%)	83.9%	(3.2%)	0.2
Pennsylvanian		90.7%	(6.0%)	82.6%	8.1%	0.5
Pere Marquette	✓	56.7%	24.5%	80.0%	(23.3%)	2.4
Piedmont		83.4%	6.7%	83.7%	(0.3%)	(0.8)
San Joaquins	✓	91.3%	3.6%	81.2%	10.2%	2.1
Vermonteer		86.1%	(1.0%)	80.0%	6.1%	0.1
Wolverines	✓	69.3%	29.0%	80.0%	(10.7%)	2.2
<i>Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2010: 72.5%)</i>						
Auto Train		85.8%	(5.5%)	75.8%	9.9%	1.1
California Zephyr	✓	59.7%	10.0%	72.5%	(12.8%)	4.6
Capitol Limited	✓	75.8%	16.5%	72.5%	3.3%	3.1
Cardinal	✓	65.4%	23.1%	72.5%	(7.1%)	0.3
City of New Orleans		78.5%	(0.4%)	85.0%	(6.5%)	(0.2)
Coast Starlight	✓	88.1%	13.0%	72.5%	15.6%	2.1
Crescent		77.2%	(5.6%)	72.5%	4.7%	0.6
Empire Builder		76.6%	7.5%	80.4%	(3.8%)	(0.2)
Lake Shore Limited	✓	83.9%	13.3%	72.5%	11.4%	4.1
Palmetto		68.8%	(6.0%)	72.5%	(3.7%)	3.7
Silver Meteor		70.9%	(11.8%)	72.5%	(1.6%)	1.4
Silver Star	✓	79.4%	7.5%	72.5%	6.9%	1.6
Southwest Chief	✓	87.4%	5.0%	75.1%	12.4%	0.7
Sunset Limited	✓	90.8%	21.8%	72.5%	18.3%	4.0
Texas Eagle	✓	77.5%	18.9%	72.5%	5.0%	2.1