



U.S. Department
of Transportation

ADMINISTRATOR

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

OCT 26 2011

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 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 quarterly 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
Administrator

Enclosures

Amtrak On-Time Performance (OTP) Report (Required by Section 154 of Pub. L. 111-117)

This report includes (1) an update on recent Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) efforts to improve Amtrak's on-time performance and (2) Amtrak's OTP results and performance against FRA-established goals.

(1) OTP Highlights through August of Fiscal Year (FY) 2011

OTP Benefits of the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) and Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Programs: On May 9, 2011, the Secretary announced over \$2 billion in FY 2010 high-speed and intercity passenger rail (HSIPR) rail grants that covers 15 States as well as the Amtrak-owned Northeast Corridor (NEC) (a complete list of selected investments is available at www.fra.dot.gov/roa/press_releases/fp_DOT_57-11.shtml). Through the States, and now Amtrak, the HSIPR program is providing a total of approximately \$10.1 billion for incremental upgrades to existing railroads as well as new high-speed rail systems. FRA, Amtrak, the States, and host railroads continue to develop agreements for the performance improvement(s) in intercity passenger rail service that are to be realized upon completion of the respective projects.

Most of the HSIPR awards will ultimately raise the effective speed of the benefiting services, through a combination of better reliability (through capacity additions and other means) and/or higher running speeds. One example of a benefitting project is the obligation of \$745 million for construction along the NEC to upgrade the components and/or capacity of some of the most heavily-used sections, resulting in improved on-time performance and reliability. As another example, a total of \$729 million of Federal funds is being invested to procure new, American-built locomotives and passenger rail cars that will operate on corridors throughout California, Washington State, and the Midwest. These cars will be capable of traveling at 125 mph and will improve equipment reliability while increasing passenger capacity. When complete, these and many other HSIPR projects are expected to directly improve the OTP of the affected routes, as measured in this series of OTP reports to Congress as well as the Metrics and Standards reports required under Section 207 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA).

In addition to the HSIPR grant program, FRA's RRIF program offers opportunities to benefit passenger and freight railroads. On June 29, 2011 Secretary LaHood announced a \$562.9 million loan to Amtrak under RRIF that will create hundreds of manufacturing jobs across several states. The dollars will finance the purchase of 70 high-performance, electric locomotives from Siemens Industry USA, enabling Amtrak to replace 20-to-30-year-old electric locomotives, averaging 3.5 million miles each, with modern, high-quality equipment. The new energy-efficient locomotives will improve the reliability, as well as the frequency and performance of regional and intercity routes along the Northeast and Keystone Corridors. Currently, Amtrak's regional trains in the NEC are experiencing 0.88 equipment-caused delays of 30 minutes or more per 10,000 train-miles—more than twice as many equipment-caused delays typical of newer Acela equipment, an imbalance that the locomotives will remedy.

Publication of Metrics and Standards: Jointly with Amtrak, FRA developed and published on May 12, 2010, the Metrics and Standards for intercity passenger rail services as required

by Section 207 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). The fourth quarterly Metrics and Standards report is available on FRA's webpage at www.fra.dot.gov/Pages/2165.shtml. The latest report provides data on Amtrak's financial, operational, and service quality performance for the third quarter of FY 2011. A key feature of the operational information is the delay minutes Amtrak experiences on the host railroads for each route. The data collected for the third quarter of FY 2011 illustrates Amtrak's reliability experiences across its system, with some Class I railroads exceeding the delay minutes standard on most, if not all, of the Amtrak trains hosted.

Implementation of the Metrics and Standards: System wide, Amtrak continues to work with the host railroads to ensure that they are managing intercity passenger rail performance to the implemented Metrics and Standards as directed by PRIIA. On the southeast corridor, for example, Silver Meteor and Palmetto service operations on CSX rail met the FRA standard for host-responsible delays in the third quarter of FY 2011. Amtrak and CSX continue to focus on improvements to the Carolinian and Northeast Regional services, which continue to experience higher delays. In addition, Amtrak remains focused on eliminating extra recovery time that was temporarily added to the Auto Train schedule in FY 2007; however, CSX and Amtrak have not yet arrived at an agreement to effect this change.

With continued reporting of the quarterly Metrics and Standards and augmented detail, coupled with related provisions in other sections of the PRIIA, OTP improvements are expected with host railroads and Amtrak.

(2) Goals and Route Performance

Attachment A contains OTP statistics for all Amtrak routes through the third quarter of FY 2011. As the attachment illustrates, a fifth of the routes (9) had improvements in OTP (in terms of both improved percent on time and no decrease in effective speed) through June of FY 2011. Of those routes experiencing OTP improvement, a total of five (two corridor-type and three long-distance trains) are meeting, or are surpassing, their FRA-defined OTP target for FY 2011. By contrast, four-fifths of the routes showed declining OTP, declining effective speed, or both.

The OTP across the entire Amtrak system through June FY 2011 was 79.3 percent, which is a 0.9 percentage-point decrease from the previous year. This decline in system wide performance is largely attributable to the OTP experience of the long-distance trains, which declined by 9.4 percentage-points through period compared to the previous year (for an average endpoint OTP of 66.7 percent). Further highlighting this downturn in OTP, 80 percent of the long-distance trains have experienced a year-over-year decline in on-time arrivals through June FY 2011.

Amtrak's short-distance routes outside the NEC (i.e. "Other Corridor Services") experienced a smaller decline in OTP than the long-distance trains through the period (for a year-over-year decline of 1.6 percentage-points) and had an average endpoint OTP of 79.9 percent. Two-thirds of the short distance routes had year-over-year declines in on-time arrivals through June of this fiscal year while 80 percent of the long distance routes experienced a decline in OTP year over year.

Attachment A
Amtrak On-Time Performance: 3rd Quarter of FY 2011
(data covers October 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011)

	Test 1: On-Time Percentage (compared to prior year period and target)				Test 2: Constant or Better Effective Speed	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress
	Amtrak OTP	Change from Prior Year	FY 2011 OTP Target	Change from OTP Target	Change in MPH from October 2008 Baseline for Last 4 Quarters	
Northeast Corridor Service (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 95%)						
Acela	84.1%	3.0%	93.6%	(9.4%)	(1.1)	
Regional Service	79.5%	2.9%	91.6%	(12.1%)	(0.4)	
Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%. Min target for FY 2011: 85%)						
Adirondack	66.1%	3.7%	85.0%	(18.9%)	0.6	✓
Blue Water	59.2%	(10.7%)	85.0%	(25.8%)	2.1	
Capitols	95.1%	3.1%	86.9%	8.2%	2.0	✓
Carolinian	65.2%	17.8%	85.0%	(19.8%)	0.7	✓
Cascades	68.3%	(3.1%)	85.0%	(16.7%)	0.3	
Downeaster	81.0%	9.0%	87.6%	(6.6%)	(0.0)	
Empire Service	86.5%	(0.3%)	86.3%	0.1%	1.6	
Ethan Allen Express	64.8%	(11.6%)	85.0%	(20.2%)	0.2	
Heartland Flyer	86.2%	(0.1%)	85.0%	1.2%	3.3	
Hiawatha	88.4%	(1.4%)	89.8%	(1.4%)	(0.3)	
Hoosier State	59.1%	(16.8%)	85.0%	(25.9%)	1.6	
Illini	51.2%	(8.5%)	85.8%	(34.6%)	1.0	
Illinois Zephyr	90.9%	(1.7%)	85.0%	5.9%	1.3	
Keystone	88.1%	1.5%	89.1%	(1.0%)	(0.4)	
Lincoln Service	67.7%	(6.4%)	85.0%	(17.3%)	1.7	
Maple Leaf	64.1%	(9.3%)	85.0%	(20.9%)	0.5	
Missouri Services	89.6%	(2.4%)	85.0%	4.6%	8.1	
Pacific Surfliner	80.2%	1.7%	87.0%	(6.7%)	0.1	✓
Pennsylvanian	86.4%	(4.6%)	86.3%	0.1%	(0.1)	
Pere Marquette	53.8%	(3.4%)	85.0%	(31.2%)	2.4	
Piedmont	79.8%	5.1%	86.9%	(7.0%)	1.2	✓
San Joaquins	90.0%	0.0%	85.6%	4.4%	1.2	✓
Vermont	78.6%	(6.0%)	85.0%	(6.4%)	2.0	
Wolverines	25.4%	(42.2%)	85.0%	(59.6%)	0.2	
Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%. Minimum target for FY 2011: 78.8%)						
Auto Train	90.7%	5.1%	80.4%	10.2%	1.4	✓
California Zephyr	51.0%	(8.2%)	78.8%	(27.7%)	2.4	
Capitol Limited	49.8%	(21.4%)	78.8%	(28.9%)	1.1	
Cardinal	39.9%	(17.8%)	78.8%	(38.8%)	0.9	
City of New Orleans	73.3%	(8.3%)	85.0%	(11.7%)	0.7	
Coast Starlight	73.6%	(17.1%)	78.8%	(5.2%)	0.9	
Crescent	72.5%	(0.4%)	78.8%	(6.2%)	(0.0)	
Empire Builder	44.3%	(34.8%)	82.7%	(38.4%)	(1.4)	
Lake Shore Limited	61.1%	(18.2%)	78.8%	(17.7%)	0.5	
Palmetto	81.0%	18.4%	78.8%	2.2%	1.0	✓
Silver Meteor	81.4%	8.1%	78.8%	2.7%	0.6	✓
Silver Star	70.1%	(8.0%)	78.8%	(8.6%)	1.0	
Southwest Chief	81.0%	(2.0%)	80.0%	0.9%	0.1	
Sunset Limited	85.0%	(3.4%)	78.8%	6.3%	0.8	
Texas Eagle	64.3%	(5.3%)	78.8%	(14.4%)	2.6	