U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

JUL 11 2012

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to submit this quarterly report on Amtrak's On-time performance. I hope that the information contained in the enclosed report will assist the Committee in its work.

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

Sincerely,

for Melissa L. Path

Joseph C. Szabo
Administrator

Enclosure

Amtrak On-Time Performance (OTP) Report
(As Described in Section 154 of Pub. L. 111-117)

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

(1) OTP Highlights through the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2012

STB Investigation Under PRIIA Section 213: On January 19, 2012, Amtrak filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board ("STB"), requesting an investigation into the causes of the high level of delays to Amtrak trains running on Canadian National ("CN") tracks and making recommendations as to how delays can be reduced. The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 included a new provision giving the STB the ability to investigate the causes of poor Amtrak train performance; this is the first petition that Amtrak has filed on this issue. A mediation process is currently ongoing with an expiration date of July 2nd, 2012.

Ethan Allen Service – Vermont Railway Operational Performance Improvement Program (OPIP): Following the success of the joint Amtrak/Vermont Railway effort to reduce delays on the Vermont Railway portion of the Ethan Allen route, Amtrak is now turning to the Canadian Pacific (CP) owned portion of the Ethan Allen route, which also hosts the Adirondack. Slow orders have been a persistent issue on this segment; during the second quarter FY12, slow order delays alone were 1,243 minutes per 10,000 train miles on the CP portion of the Adirondack service, and 2,637 minutes per 10,000 train miles on the CP portion of the Ethan Allen service.

Amtrak understands that during the summer of 2012, CP will be performing a significant amount of rail replacement that will address a significant portion of the existing slow orders. Following this work, Amtrak will look to CP to continue reducing slow orders, and to so arrange its maintenance program as to prevent slow orders from growing again.

Texas Eagle Operational Performance Improvement Program: Amtrak and Union Pacific have been working since July 2011 on an effort to reduce delays on the Texas Eagle service. The joint team's efforts thus far have included operational improvements such as a new departure protocol at the Ft. Worth, TX station, and slow order improvements. The team's current focus is on reducing Freight Train Interference delays. (As shown in the attachment, OTP of the Texas Eagle through the second quarter of FY 2012 is up by 8.7 percent over the prior year, and the route's effective speed has scored the largest increase over the 2008 baseline of any long-distance route.)

I-95 Corridor Operational Performance Improvement Program: Amtrak and CSX continue their ongoing efforts to improve the performance of services in the I-95 corridor through the Atlantic Coast States between the Northeast and Florida. Critical next steps include slow order reduction between Richmond and Newport News.

Publication of Metrics and Standards Reports: 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 PRIIA. The sixth quarterly Metrics and Standards report under Section 207 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 through the first quarter of FY 2012. A key feature of the operational information is the tabulation of delay minutes that Amtrak experiences on the host railroads for each route. The data collected for the first quarter of FY 2012 illustrate Amtrak's reliability experiences across its system, with host railroads not meeting applicable standards for delay minutes on most of the Amtrak routes.

FRA Action on Service Quality of Long Distance Passenger Trains: FRA on May 31 advertised for a Long Distance Passenger Train Oversight Manager. This position will focus on the full range of service quality parameters pertaining to long-distance trains, including but not limited to OTP.

(2) Goals and Route Performance

Attachment A contains OTP statistics for all Amtrak routes through the second quarter of FY 2012. The table provides three pieces of information for each route: 1) progress made toward target goals established in 2008, 2) a comparison between FY 2012 results and the prior year, and 3) the change in effective speed. Effective speed is defined as a metric that uses the scheduled departure time from the origination point of a train, the actual arrival time of that train at the scheduled endpoint, and the normal mileage that the train operates between the normal scheduled origination point and the normal scheduled arrival point. Throughout the history of this OTP report, progress has been focused on the latter two metrics.

As the attachment illustrates, nineteen routes out of forty-one had better OTP (in terms of both a higher percent on time versus last year and no decrease in effective speed) through March of FY 2012. Of those routes experiencing OTP improvement, ten (seven corridor-type and three long-distance trains) are also meeting, or are surpassing, their FRA-defined OTP target for FY 2012. While the OTP for each of Amtrak's lines of business (the Northeast Corridor (NEC), other short-distance corridors, and long-distance routes) has risen over the previous year, the Northeast Corridor has shown the most improvement.

Underlying the enhanced OTP is a reduction in Amtrak and host railroad-responsible train delays. While these favorable developments will inevitably reflect conditions that are site-specific to each route and host railroad, Amtrak's publicly-available Monthly Performance Reports (MPRs) point to generally applicable reasons for the improving performance.[1] During the month of March 2012 compared to March 2011, total delay minutes were down by 8 percent. During this same time period Amtrak-responsible delay minutes were reduced by 18 percent (17,635 minutes) while host railroad delays were reduced by 6 percent (15,311 minutes).

[1] The Monthly Performance Reports are available on the Internet at http://www.amtrak.com/servlet/ContentServer/Page/1241245669222/1241245669129. Data are from the chart entitled "Delay Minutes Performance Report - Summary."

Attachment A

Amtrak On-Time Performance: 2nd Quarter FY 2012

(data covers Oct 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012)

			Test 1: On-Time Percentage (compared to prior year period)		Test 2: Constant or Better Effective Speed	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress
	FY 2012 OTP Target	Change from OTP Target	Amtrak OTP	Change from Prior Year	Change in MPH from October 2008 Baseline for Last 4 Quarters	
Northeast Corridor Service (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 95%)						
Acela	95.0%	(2.8%)	92.2%	6.1%	(0.1)	
Regional Service	95.0%	(6.5%)	88.5%	4.3%	0.2	✓
Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%)						
Adirondack	90.0%	(9.4%)	80.6%	(3.8%)	0.7	
Blue Water	90.0%	(22.3%)	67.7%	(8.4%)	2.5	
Capitols	90.0%	3.9%	93.9%	(1.4%)	2.3	
Carolinian	90.0%	(10.5%)	79.5%	16.8%	1.1	✓
Cascades	90.0%	(16.5%)	73.5%	0.6%	0.5	✓
Downeaster	90.0%	(4.1%)	85.9%	(4.0%)	0.1	
Empire Service	90.0%	4.3%	94.3%	6.9%	2.5	✓
Ethan Allen Express	90.0%	(14.3%)	75.7%	7.1%	1.3	✓
Heartland Flyer	90.0%	(17.9%)	72.1%	(8.7%)	2.0	
Hiawatha	90.0%	2.1%	92.1%	5.4%	0.2	✓
Hoosier State	90.0%	(23.2%)	66.8%	4.0%	1.6	✓
Illini	90.0%	(14.5%)	75.5%	30.2%	2.0	✓
Illinois Zephyr	90.0%	0.4%	90.4%	(1.4%)	0.5	
Keystone	90.0%	1.2%	91.2%	3.0%	0.2	✓
Lincoln Service	90.0%	(8.0%)	82.0%	10.5%	2.9	✓
Maple Leaf	90.0%	(9.7%)	80.3%	10.9%	0.2	✓
Missouri Services	90.0%	2.7%	92.7%	(2.4%)	7.9	
Pacific Surfliner	90.0%	(13.9%)	76.1%	(0.9%)	0.1	
Pennsylvanian	90.0%	4.2%	94.2%	3.2%	0.0	
Pere Marquette	90.0%	(34.1%)	55.9%	(2.7%)	2.5	
Piedmont	90.0%	(15.4%)	74.6%	(5.7%)	1.6	
San Joaquins	90.0%	(1.2%)	88.8%	(3.0%)	1.0	
Vermonter	90.0%	(1.7%)	88.3%	(2.2%)	2.2	
Wolverines	90.0%	(50.1%)	39.9%	(10.5%)	(0.9)	
Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%)						
Auto Train	85.0%	1.9%	86.9%	0.5%	0.8	✓
California Zephyr	85.0%	(39.9%)	45.1%	(18.5%)	1.7	
Capitol Limited	85.0%	(15.3%)	69.7%	(3.3%)	1.3	
Cardinal	85.0%	(34.0%)	51.0%	12.7%	0.9	✓
City of New Orleans	85.0%	0.8%	85.8%	15.2%	0.9	✓
Coast Starlight	85.0%	(3.0%)	82.0%	7.7%	1.0	✓
Crescent	85.0%	0.2%	85.2%	11.4%	0.3	✓
Empire Builder	85.0%	(15.0%)	70.0%	14.4%	(0.9)	
Lake Shore Limited	85.0%	(7.4%)	77.6%	(3.9%)	0.8	
Palmetto	85.0%	(2.2%)	82.8%	9.8%	0.6	✓
Silver Meteor	85.0%	(13.4%)	71.6%	(1.6%)	0.4	
Silver Star	85.0%	(14.0%)	71.0%	2.7%	0.9	✓
Southwest Chief	85.0%	(6.0%)	79.0%	(14.1%)	(0.2)	
Sunset Limited	85.0%	(21.5%)	63.5%	(16.8%)	0.1	
Texas Eagle	85.0%	(3.6%)	81.4%	8.7%	2.2	✓