



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

JUL 8 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph C. Szabo".

Joseph C. Szabo
Administrator

Enclosures

**July 2011 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 and effect improvements in Amtrak's on-time performance (OTP); and (2) in keeping with the FRA's April 1, 2011 OTP report, an update on Amtrak's OTP results and performance against FRA-established goals.

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

OTP Benefits of the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program: On May 9, 2011, the Obama Administration announced the most recent round of selected programs and projects within 15 States, including the Amtrak-owned Northeast Corridor, under the FRA's HSIPR Program (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, this program has committed approximately \$10.1 billion for projects to upgrade existing passenger rail operations, while also introducing new high-speed rail services, all for the purpose of strengthening intercity passenger transportation in populated corridors.

Many 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. FRA, Amtrak, the States, and host railroads have been working to develop agreements for the performance improvement(s) in intercity passenger rail service that are to be realized upon completion of the respective projects. Accordingly, the completion of the FRA's HSIPR betterments will 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).

Publication of Metrics and Standards Reports: Stemming from the May 12, 2010 publication of the final Metrics and Standards for intercity passenger rail services, which FRA developed jointly with Amtrak in compliance with Section 207 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), FRA (with Amtrak's assistance) has published the second quarterly Metrics and Standards report, available on FRA's webpage at www.fra.dot.gov/rpd/passenger/2165.shtml. This report provides data on Amtrak's financial, operational, and service quality performance during the first quarter of FY 2011. A key feature of the operational information is the delay minutes Amtrak experiences on the host railroads for each route.

Metrics and Standards data collected for the first quarter of FY 2011 illustrate the spectrum of reliability that Amtrak experiences across its system, with some Class I railroads exceeding the delay minutes standard on most, if not all, of the Amtrak trains they host. The next report of Metrics and Standards will show results from data collected for the second quarter of FY 2011.

Implementation of the Metrics and Standards: System-wide, Amtrak has been working with the host railroads to ensure that they are managing intercity passenger rail performance to

the implemented Metrics and Standards. On the Southeast Corridor in particular, operations of the Amtrak *Silver Meteor* and *Palmetto* on CSX-owned railroad lines met the standard for host-responsible delays between January and March of 2011. On two routes with less than satisfactory results, Amtrak and CSX are focusing on improvements to the *Carolinian* and Northeast Regional services to Richmond and Newport News, VA, which have higher delays that exceed the applicable standard. In addition, Amtrak remains interested in removing 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.

The FRA believes that over the long term, the ongoing reporting of the quarterly Metrics and Standards with added detail, coupled with related provisions in other sections of the PRIIA, will provide additional impetus for the host railroads and Amtrak to emphasize their collaborative efforts toward OTP improvement.

(2) Goals and Route Performance

Attachment A contains OTP statistics for all Amtrak routes for the first half 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 March of FY 2011. Of those routes experiencing OTP improvement, a total of six (three corridor-type and three long-distance trains) are meeting, or 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 for FY 2011 through March was 79.1 percent, which is nearly a two 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 9.1 percentage-points in the first half of FY 2011 compared to the previous year (for an average endpoint OTP of 68.7 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 in FY 2011 through March.

Amtrak's short distance routes outside the NEC (i.e. "Other Corridor Services") experienced a smaller decline in OTP than the long-distance trains during the first half of the fiscal year (for a year-over-year decline of 2.6 percentage-points) and had an average endpoint OTP of 80.2 percent during the first half of FY 2011. However, as was the case with the long-distance trains, over four-fifths of the short distance routes had year-over-year declines in on-time arrivals through March of this fiscal year.

During the second quarter of the fiscal year, freight train interference was a primary or secondary cause for the largest number of delay minutes on nearly all the long-distance routes. Other prominent causes included slow order delays due to heat-related track speed restrictions, and signal problems for example. Clearly, additional attention and cooperation will be needed between Amtrak and the freight railroads to safeguard and improve the OTP of intercity passenger rail operations.

Attachment A
Amtrak On-Time Performance for the First Half of FY 2011
 Year-to-Date Totals for October 2010 through March 2011

	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress	Test 1: Higher Percent On Time at Route Endpoints YTD - March 2011 vs. YTD - March 2010				Test 2: Constant or Better Effective Speed
		FY11 % On Time	% Change from FY10	Proposed Target for FY11	% Variance from FY11 Target	Change in MPH from October 2008 Baseline for Last 4 Quarters
<i>Northeast Corridor Service (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 95%)</i>						
Acela		81.7%	0.8%	93.6%	(11.8%)	(1.1)
Regional Service		77.0%	1.8%	91.6%	(14.6%)	(0.4)
<i>Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2011: 85%)</i>						
Adirondack		73.6%	(0.8%)	85.0%	(11.4%)	0.5
Blue Water		63.6%	(5.6%)	85.0%	(21.4%)	2.6
Capitols	✓	95.4%	4.4%	86.9%	8.5%	2.0
Carolinian	✓	67.3%	11.2%	85.0%	(17.7%)	0.3
Cascades		66.7%	(4.3%)	85.0%	(18.3%)	0.3
Downeaster		80.7%	(0.7%)	87.6%	(6.9%)	(0.3)
Empire Service		79.4%	(5.8%)	86.3%	(7.0%)	0.9
Ethan Allen Express		62.0%	(20.2%)	85.0%	(23.0%)	0.0
Heartland Flyer		87.8%	(0.7%)	85.0%	2.8%	3.3
Hiawatha		86.7%	(3.5%)	89.8%	(3.1%)	(0.6)
Hoosier State		62.4%	(13.0%)	85.0%	(22.6%)	1.8
Illini	✓	52.1%	1.0%	85.8%	(33.7%)	1.8
Illinois Zephyr		91.2%	(2.7%)	85.0%	6.2%	1.2
Keystone		86.4%	1.4%	89.1%	(2.7%)	(0.5)
Lincoln Service		68.7%	(7.7%)	85.0%	(16.3%)	1.8
Maple Leaf		69.8%	(9.6%)	85.0%	(15.2%)	0.7
Missouri Services		89.5%	(3.6%)	85.0%	4.5%	8.0
Pacific Surfliner		79.8%	(0.5%)	87.0%	(7.2%)	0.0
Pennsylvanian	✓	91.2%	0.8%	86.3%	4.9%	0.2
Pere Marquette		59.4%	(0.6%)	85.0%	(25.6%)	2.5
Piedmont		79.2%	(0.4%)	86.9%	(7.7%)	0.7
San Joaquins	✓	90.8%	1.0%	85.6%	5.2%	1.3
Vermont		77.2%	(9.1%)	85.0%	(7.8%)	2.0
Wolverines		33.2%	(36.1%)	85.0%	(51.8%)	1.3
<i>Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2011: 78.8%)</i>						
Auto Train	✓	92.0%	5.2%	80.4%	11.6%	1.2
California Zephyr		51.8%	(7.6%)	78.8%	(26.9%)	2.6
Capitol Limited		57.7%	(14.8%)	78.8%	(21.1%)	1.5
Cardinal		47.1%	(19.6%)	78.8%	(31.7%)	0.9
City of New Orleans		77.7%	(3.0%)	85.0%	(7.3%)	1.1
Coast Starlight		71.6%	(16.8%)	78.8%	(7.1%)	1.1
Crescent		76.1%	(0.8%)	78.8%	(2.7%)	0.0
Empire Builder		43.2%	(34.2%)	82.7%	(39.5%)	(0.7)
Lake Shore Limited		62.9%	(21.4%)	78.8%	(15.8%)	0.8
Palmetto	✓	83.5%	13.1%	78.8%	4.8%	0.5
Silver Meteor	✓	82.6%	12.0%	78.8%	3.8%	0.5
Silver Star		70.1%	(7.6%)	78.8%	(8.7%)	1.0
Southwest Chief		80.5%	(5.2%)	80.0%	0.5%	0.2
Sunset Limited		86.5%	(3.8%)	78.8%	7.8%	2.9
Texas Eagle		73.6%	0.0%	78.8%	(5.1%)	3.0