



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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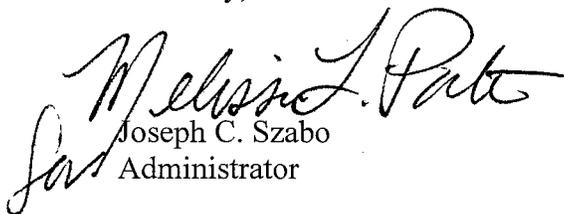
The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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 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

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 Third Quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2012

Summary: During the third quarter of FY 2012, Host-Responsible delays improved slightly relative to the same period the previous year, although these delays were higher than during the same period in FY 2010 and FY 2009. BNSF had the lowest overall level of delay of any of the major hosts. Canadian Pacific (CP) had the highest level of delay. On CP, high delays were driven primarily by Freight Train Interference (FTI) delays, which now are at their highest sustained level on CP since at least 2001, and by slow orders on the route used by the Adirondack and Ethan Allen services. The FRA is intensifying its oversight of long-distance train operations, which generally suffer from the worst OTP record on the Amtrak system. Meanwhile, FRA-sponsored investments in railway infrastructure are beginning to come on line, with direct long-term OTP benefits.

Ethan Allen and Adirondack Services – Slow Orders on Canadian Pacific Railway: Slow orders have been a persistent issue on the CP-owned portion of the Adirondack and Ethan Allen services. During the third quarter of FY 2012, slow order delays alone were approximately 1,300 minutes per 10,000 train-miles on the CP portion of the Adirondack service, and 2,150 minutes per 10,000 train-miles on the CP portion of the Ethan Allen service. (The applicable standard for total train delays of all types under Section 207 of the Passenger Rail Improvement and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) is 900 minutes per 10,000 train-miles.)

CP had previously informed Amtrak that during summer 2012 CP would perform rail replacement to address a significant portion of the existing slow orders. That project did not occur, and CP indicates that it is now scheduled for September-October 2012. If the project is not completed by then, cold weather might prevent the project from being undertaken until calendar year 2013, in which case the slow order delays would persist through the winter.

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 PRIIA statute passed in 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/proceeding is currently ongoing. The Department remains cognizant of these ongoing developments and looks forward to appropriate resolution of this matter.

Texas Eagle Operations Operational Performance Improvement Program (OPIP):

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 (FTI) delays. Thus far the OPIP has not succeeded in improving All-Stations OTP, and has shown limited success with Endpoint OTP: during the third quarter of FY 2012, All-Stations OTP and Endpoint OTP were 42% and 54%, respectively, compared with 42% and 46% the during the same period in FY 2011.

I-95 Corridor. Critical next steps in improving I-95 Corridor performance include slow order reduction between Richmond and Newport News on the Northeast Regional service, and an increased focus on the performance of the Auto Train and Carolinian. These services do not currently comply with the targets set by FRA for purposes of this report.

In 2008 Amtrak temporarily added an hour to the Auto Train schedule based on an assurance by CSX that OTP on this service would remain over 80%. Since then CSX and Amtrak have not been able to reach agreement on removing the temporary time from the schedule, and in recent months Endpoint OTP performance has deteriorated even with the extra hour, driven primarily by FTI. In FY 2012's third quarter alone, Endpoint OTP for the Auto Train was 79%, the first time since the hour was added that Endpoint OTP was below 80%. On the other hand, the Auto Train's effective speed for the last four quarters slightly exceeds the 2008 baseline (by 0.5 mph); and in partial results for the fourth quarter of FY 2012, the Auto Train achieved 92 percent Endpoint OTP in July, and 90 percent in August.

Intensified FRA Oversight of Long-Distance Train Service Quality: The FRA is enhancing its oversight of the service quality of long-distance trains—including but not limited to OTP—by adding a staff member, specifically dedicated to that purpose, to the Office of Railroad Policy and Development. The position was advertised in the third quarter of FY 2012, a selection was made, and the successful candidate has reported for duty. Intensified monitoring of long-distance train performance will enable the incumbent to keep the Federal Railroad Administrator more immediately informed of OTP and other service conditions in Amtrak's long-distance network.

FRA Investments with Long-Term OTP Impacts: Investments sponsored by FRA in passenger-rail-related infrastructure can have lasting impacts on OTP. Two recently-completed projects exemplify the kinds of site-specific improvements that will cumulatively benefit OTP in the long run. In Missouri, on Amtrak's route between St. Louis and Kansas City, \$3.1 million in FRA funding leveraged \$5 million in state funding to build a 9,000 foot passing track that bifurcated a 25 mile stretch of single track that had long delayed the St. Louis-Kansas City trains. This investment contributed to the improvement of Endpoint OTP on that route, from 19 percent in FY 2008 to 88 percent thus far in FY 2012. In California, FRA helped to fund the construction of two recently-completed maintenance of way spurs on the route of the Pacific Surfliner. The spurs will minimize delays to intercity passenger trains due to track maintenance on a busy segment of the route that also hosts heavy commuter rail (Metrolink) and freight traffic. These are but two examples of the site-specific benefits that are beginning to accrue from projects under the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail and other programs.

Attachment A: Amtrak On-Time Performance: 3rd Quarter FY 2012
(data covers Oct 1, 2011 to June 30, 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%	(4.1%)	90.9%	6.7%	(0.2)	
Regional Service	95.0%	(7.5%)	87.5%	8.0%	0.3	✓
Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%)						
Adirondack	90.0%	(9.7%)	80.3%	8.7%	1.0	✓
Blue Water	90.0%	(17.8%)	72.2%	13.0%	2.9	✓
Capitols	90.0%	3.7%	93.7%	(1.3%)	2.3	
Carolinian	90.0%	(13.7%)	76.3%	11.1%	1.2	✓
Cascades	90.0%	(15.7%)	74.3%	6.0%	0.6	✓
Downeaster	90.0%	(2.8%)	87.2%	6.2%	0.4	✓
Empire Service	90.0%	2.8%	92.8%	9.8%	2.6	✓
Ethan Allen Express	90.0%	(16.6%)	73.4%	8.6%	1.9	✓
Heartland Flyer	90.0%	(21.0%)	69.0%	(17.2%)	1.4	
Hiawatha	90.0%	2.0%	92.0%	3.6%	0.3	✓
Hoosier State	90.0%	(21.4%)	68.6%	9.5%	2.1	✓
Illini	90.0%	(14.5%)	75.5%	24.3%	2.7	✓
Illinois Zephyr	90.0%	2.3%	92.3%	1.4%	0.7	✓
Keystone	90.0%	2.1%	92.1%	3.9%	0.4	✓
Lincoln Service	90.0%	(11.6%)	78.4%	10.7%	2.9	✓
Maple Leaf	90.0%	(16.1%)	73.9%	9.8%	0.5	✓
Missouri Services	90.0%	1.5%	91.5%	1.9%	7.9	✓
Pacific Surfliner	90.0%	(12.5%)	77.5%	(2.7%)	0.1	
Pennsylvanian	90.0%	4.1%	94.1%	7.7%	0.4	✓
Pere Marquette	90.0%	(36.4%)	53.6%	(0.2%)	2.5	
Piedmont	90.0%	(17.4%)	72.6%	(7.2%)	1.4	
San Joaquins	90.0%	(1.3%)	88.7%	(1.3%)	1.0	
Vermont	90.0%	(4.6%)	85.4%	6.8%	2.0	✓
Wolverines	90.0%	(48.5%)	41.5%	16.1%	(0.1)	
Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%)						
Auto Train	85.0%	(0.9%)	84.1%	0.5%	0.5	✓
California Zephyr	85.0%	(36.8%)	48.2%	(18.5%)	1.9	
Capitol Limited	85.0%	(11.8%)	73.2%	(3.3%)	1.7	
Cardinal	85.0%	(42.4%)	42.6%	12.7%	0.9	✓
City of New Orleans	85.0%	2.8%	87.8%	15.2%	1.4	✓
Coast Starlight	85.0%	(3.8%)	81.2%	7.7%	1.2	✓
Crescent	85.0%	(0.9%)	84.1%	11.4%	0.5	✓
Empire Builder	85.0%	(15.3%)	69.7%	14.4%	(0.4)	
Lake Shore Limited	85.0%	(10.1%)	74.9%	(3.9%)	1.0	
Palmetto	85.0%	(6.5%)	78.5%	9.8%	0.6	✓
Silver Meteor	85.0%	(15.7%)	69.3%	(1.6%)	0.2	
Silver Star	85.0%	(15.7%)	69.3%	2.7%	0.9	✓
Southwest Chief	85.0%	(9.1%)	75.9%	(14.1%)	(0.3)	
Sunset Limited	85.0%	(21.8%)	63.2%	(16.8%)	(0.3)	
Texas Eagle	85.0%	(12.7%)	72.3%	8.7%	2.3	✓