



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

DEC 29 2008

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, 2009 (Pub. L. 111-8) requires the Federal Railroad Administrator to "submit a quarterly report on April 1, 2009, 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

January 1, 2010

**January 2010 Report on Amtrak On-Time Performance
Submitted by the Federal Railroad Administrator
Under Section 154 of Pub. L. 111-8**

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 October 1, 2009 OTP report, an update on Amtrak OTP results and performance against FRA-established goals.

(1) Highlights of Fiscal Year 2009 OTP Improvement Outcomes

Southeast Corridor: Amtrak continues to benefit from reductions in slow orders and freight train interference as a result of 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. The delay reductions that Amtrak experienced in FY 2009 coincided with an increase in on-time arrivals among SEC trains during the fiscal year; however, the overall OTP levels varied among the trains traversing this corridor. The *Auto Train* had the highest endpoint OTP among Amtrak's long-distance trains (88.7 percent) in FY 2009 and achieved an on-time performance of 95 percent in the month of September. The *Palmetto*, *Carolinian*, and *Silver Star* experienced notable year-over-year improvements to their endpoint OTP in FY 2009 (increases of 15, 18, and 23 percentage points respectively), however, despite these improvements, these three routes were in Amtrak's bottom third for on-time arrivals for the fiscal year.

California Zephyr: The Union Pacific (UP) Railroad and Amtrak continue to implement their 2007 agreement to reduce delays on UP's portion of the *California Zephyr*, which extends from Denver, Colorado to Emeryville, California. As part of the agreement, Amtrak had temporarily added time to the *Zephyr's* schedule to account for the UP's track improvement work, however, the track work has been completed and all the additional time has now been removed from the timetable. In FY 2009, the California Zephyr's OTP advanced to 60 percent, a 30 percentage-point improvement over the preceding year.

Other Recent OTP Developments: Amtrak and UP 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 73.3 percent in FY 2009, which year-over-year, was a 30 percentage-point improvement.

While performance improvement plans between Amtrak and host freight railroads continue to move forward, the implementation of identified action items across Amtrak's network is expected to accelerate upon completion 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. Amtrak and FRA have reviewed the submitted comments and are currently finalizing these performance measures.

(2) Goals and Route Performance

Attachment A contains updated OTP statistics for all Amtrak routes for FY 2009. As the attachment illustrates, three-fourths of the routes (30) have had improvements in OTP (in terms of both improved percent on-time and no decrease in effective speed) through September 2009. Of those routes experiencing OTP improvement, a total of 19 (eight corridor-type and eleven long-distance trains) are meeting, or are surpassing, their FRA-defined OTP target for FY 2009.

The on-time performance across the entire Amtrak system for FY 2009 was 80.4 percent, an increase of 9.3 percentage points over the previous year. Amtrak's short distance routes outside of the Northeast Corridor (i.e. "Other Corridor Services") experienced a 9.5 percentage-point increase year-over-year (for an average endpoint OTP of 80.5 percent) while the long-distance trains experienced a 21 percentage-point increase over the previous year (for an average endpoint OTP of 75.2 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.

In summary, while notable OTP improvements were made across the Amtrak system in FY 2009, considerable work remains to bring Amtrak's OTP to satisfactory levels. The momentum that was built in FY 2009 can only be helped by further cooperation between Amtrak and the freight railroads, the implementation of the PRIIA Section 207 Metrics and Standards, the completion of the initial investments announced in FY 2008 under the FRA's Capital Assistance to States—Intercity Passenger Rail Service program, and the prospect of noteworthy State-sponsored investments under the FRA's ongoing High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program.

Attachment A
Amtrak On-Time Performance for FY 2009

Year-to-Date Totals through September

Year-to-Date Totals through September						
	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress	Test 1: Higher Percent On Time YTD - September 2009 vs. YTD - September 2008				Test 2: Constant or Better Effective Speed
		FY09 % On Time	% Change from FY08	Proposed Target for FY09	% Variance from FY09 Target	Change in MPH from October 2007 Baseline
Northeast Corridor Service (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 95%)						
Acela		87.2%	2.7%	90.7%	(3.5%)	(1.1)
Regional Service		80.0%	4.3%	84.8%	(4.7%)	(1.3)
Other Corridor Services (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 90%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2009: 75%)						
Adirondack	✓	57.4%	13.6%	75.0%	(17.6%)	2.0
Blue Water	✓	50.9%	23.0%	75.0%	(24.1%)	1.5
Capitols	✓	92.3%	6.3%	80.8%	11.6%	1.5
Carolinian	✓	57.2%	17.9%	75.0%	(17.8%)	2.0
Cascades	✓	71.3%	6.6%	75.0%	(3.7%)	0.6
Downeaster		74.9%	4.3%	82.8%	(7.9%)	(0.5)
Empire Service		82.6%	9.7%	79.0%	3.6%	(1.6)
Ethan Allen Express		55.7%	18.9%	75.0%	(19.3%)	(2.0)
Heartland Flyer	✓	83.8%	32.2%	75.0%	8.8%	4.9
Hiawatha		87.1%	(0.2%)	89.5%	(2.4%)	(0.7)
Hoosier State	✓	52.2%	10.7%	75.0%	(22.8%)	0.9
Illini		46.2%	(2.4%)	77.4%	(31.2%)	(1.8)
Illinois Zephyr	✓	88.3%	10.5%	75.1%	13.2%	1.0
Keystone	✓	90.0%	2.3%	87.2%	2.8%	0.4
Lincoln Service	✓	73.3%	30.2%	75.0%	(1.7%)	1.8
Maple Leaf	✓	60.3%	15.9%	75.0%	(14.7%)	1.2
Missouri Services	✓	73.6%	55.0%	75.0%	(1.4%)	5.1
Pacific Surfliner	✓	83.2%	7.1%	80.9%	2.3%	0.3
Pennsylvanian	✓	96.0%	9.3%	78.9%	17.1%	1.2
Pere Marquette	✓	38.3%	15.6%	75.0%	(36.7%)	0.7
Piedmont		76.0%	6.0%	80.6%	(4.6%)	(0.9)
San Joaquins	✓	89.6%	7.0%	76.8%	12.8%	0.3
Vermont	✓	88.9%	48.2%	75.0%	13.9%	0.4
Wolverines	✓	44.0%	17.7%	75.0%	(31.0%)	0.7
Long Distance Trains (Goal proposed for FY 2012: 85%. Minimum target proposed for FY 2009: 66%)						
Auto Train	✓	88.7%	6.7%	71.3%	17.4%	1.5
California Zephyr	✓	59.9%	29.8%	66.3%	(6.4%)	4.1
Capitol Limited	✓	70.7%	38.1%	66.3%	4.4%	3.4
Cardinal		45.7%	14.4%	66.3%	(20.6%)	(0.4)
City of New Orleans		83.0%	20.7%	85.0%	(2.0%)	(0.1)
Coast Starlight	✓	82.4%	21.7%	66.3%	16.2%	1.8
Crescent	✓	84.0%	17.0%	66.3%	17.7%	1.0
Empire Builder		75.7%	6.9%	78.0%	(2.4%)	(0.2)
Lake Shore Limited	✓	75.7%	17.6%	66.3%	9.4%	3.7
Palmetto	✓	66.9%	15.4%	66.3%	0.7%	3.7
Silver Meteor	✓	72.6%	6.1%	66.3%	6.3%	1.7
Silver Star	✓	67.7%	22.6%	66.3%	1.4%	1.5
Southwest Chief	✓	85.2%	19.8%	70.1%	15.1%	0.6
Sunset Limited	✓	79.2%	52.1%	66.3%	13.0%	2.9
Texas Eagle	✓	75.2%	57.3%	66.3%	9.0%	1.6