U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

FEB 15 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

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 (in Attachment A).

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

Summary: During FY 2012, Host-Responsible delays improved slightly relative to FY 2011, with all six major hosts showing at least some improvement. Delays were higher, however, than during FY 2010 and most of FY 2009. BNSF had the lowest overall level of delay of any of the major hosts; Canadian National (CN) had the highest level of delay, driven primarily by its Freight Train Interference (FTI) delays, which exceeded those on other major host railroads.

STB Investigation Under PRIIA Section 213: On January 19, 2012, Amtrak filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (STB), asking it to investigate the causes of the high level of delays to Amtrak trains running on the tracks of CN, and make recommendations as to how delays can be reduced. The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) included a new provision giving the STB the ability to investigate the causes of poor Amtrak train performance; this is the first petition Amtrak has filed under this provision. The STB's proceeding ongoing. The Department remains cognizant of these developments and looks forward to appropriate resolution of this matter.

Ethan Allen and Adirondack Services – Need for Slow Order Improvement on Canadian Pacific Railway: Following the success of a 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 fourth quarter of FY 2012, slow order delays alone were 1,316 minutes per 10,000 train-miles on the CP portion of the Adirondack service, and 2,238 minutes per 10,000 train-miles on the CP portion of the Ethan Allen service. (These slow order delays alone far exceed the total delay allowance of 900 minutes per 10,000 train-miles under the PRIIA Section 207 Metrics and Standards.)

CP had initially scheduled rail replacements to eliminate some of these slow order delays during Summer 2012. The project was later pushed back to Fall 2012, and now is expected to be only about two-thirds complete by the end of the year. CP now indicates that the rest of the project will be done during the 2013 construction season. Following the current work, Amtrak will look to CP to continue reducing slow orders, and to conduct preventive maintenance to prevent slow orders from recurring.

Texas Eagle: 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 new departure protocols at the San Antonio and Ft. Worth stations, and slow order improvements. During September and October 2012, the team made significant progress in reducing Freight Train Interference delays. Nonetheless, there remains room for improvement, as total delays continue to exceed the PRIIA standard.

I-95 Corridor: Following several years of improvement, CSX Freight Train Interference (FTI) delays have begun to increase significantly on the I-95 corridor. In FY 2012, CSX FTI delays on the Auto Train, Silver Service, Palmetto, and Carolinian increased collectively by 35%, with the largest increase being on the Carolinian (55% increase in FTI delays). Amtrak's Host Railroads group has conducted a special analysis of this corridor's recent performance trends and is seeking assistance from CSX management. The next quarterly OTP report will contain an update on this developing situation.

Over the segment between Richmond and Newport News, Virginia, CSX has experienced slow order delays that have varied significantly from month to month; most recently, slow orders declined following a major track work project in August 2012.

Cardinal: Following several months of joint efforts, Amtrak and CSX have reduced CSX-responsible delays to within the PRIIA standard on the Cardinal. Amtrak and the Buckingham Branch Railroad (BBRR) are now working together on a plan to reduce delays on the BBRR portion of the route. The largest categories of delay on BBRR are slow orders and signal failures.

Intensified FRA Oversight of Long-Distance Train Service Quality: The FRA has enhanced 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. Intensified monitoring of long-distance train performance will keep the Federal Railroad Administrator more immediately informed of OTP and other service conditions in Amtrak's long-distance network, which consists of 15 routes. This is particularly important in view of FRA's responsibilities, under Section 210 of PRIIA, to monitor Amtrak's progress in implementing its Performance Improvement Plans for these routes.

FRA Investments with Long-Term OTP Impacts: Investments sponsored by FRA in passenger-rail-related infrastructure can have lasting impacts on OTP. A recently-completed project highlights the types of corridor improvements that provide immediate and long-term OTP benefits. The State of Vermont received $52.7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds through the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program to improve 190 miles of track between St. Albans and Vernon. FRA funding leveraged nearly $20 million in non-Federal funds, including $5 million in private investment from New England Central Railroad, a class III railroad headquartered in St. Albans, as these improvements provide meaningful benefits for both passenger and freight rail services. The project will result in increased speeds and greater reliability, will allow for additional frequencies, and will result in approximately 30 minutes in travel time savings. Multi-party agreements will ensure on-time performance of at least 90% going forward.

Attachment A: Amtrak On-Time Performance: Full Fiscal Year 2012

[Data cover Oct 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012]	-	-	**Test 1:** On-Time Percentage		**Test 2:** Constant or Better Effective Speed	✓ Indicates both tests were met for OTP Progress
	FY 2012 OTP Target	Percentage Point Variance from OTP Target	Amtrak OTP	Percentage Point Variance from Prior Year	Change in MPH from October 2008 Baseline for Last 4 Quarters	
Northeast Corridor Service (Goal for FY 2012: 95%)						
Acela	95.0%	(5.3%)	89.7%	5.7%	(0.1)	
Regional Service	95.0%	(8.5%)	86.5%	7.4%	0.1	✓
Other Corridor Services (Goal for FY 2012: 90%)						
Adirondack	90.0%	(14.2%)	75.8%	14.6%	1.2	✓
Blue Water	90.0%	(15.9%)	74.1%	19.6%	3.6	✓
Capitols	90.0%	3.8%	93.8%	(1.0%)	2.2	
Carolinian	90.0%	(16.4%)	73.6%	10.3%	1.4	✓
Cascades	90.0%	(15.9%)	74.1%	4.1%	0.5	✓
Downeaster	90.0%	(3.7%)	86.3%	10.9%	0.9	✓
Empire Service	90.0%	0.4%	90.4%	5.9%	0.7	✓
Ethan Allen Express	90.0%	(17.7%)	72.3%	11.6%	2.7	✓
Heartland Flyer	90.0%	(30.8%)	59.2%	(15.9%)	0.9	
Hiawatha	90.0%	0.1%	90.1%	1.8%	0.2	✓
Hoosier State	90.0%	(20.9%)	69.1%	9.3%	2.4	✓
Illini	90.0%	(18.7%)	71.3%	16.3%	2.4	✓
Illinois Zephyr	90.0%	0.3%	90.3%	1.7%	0.9	✓
Keystone	90.0%	2.4%	92.4%	3.9%	0.6	✓
Lincoln Service	90.0%	(13.6%)	76.4%	12.0%	3.2	✓
Maple Leaf	90.0%	(22.9%)	67.1%	9.5%	0.7	✓
Missouri Services	90.0%	(1.6%)	88.4%	2.7%	8.0	✓
Pacific Surfliner	90.0%	(14.4%)	75.6%	(2.0%)	0.0	
Pennsylvanian	90.0%	3.3%	93.3%	8.1%	0.7	✓
Pere Marquette	90.0%	(40.3%)	49.7%	(1.9%)	2.4	
Piedmont	90.0%	(17.5%)	72.5%	(7.8%)	1.2	
San Joaquins	90.0%	(1.9%)	88.1%	(1.4%)	1.0	
Vermonter	90.0%	(4.6%)	85.4%	7.0%	2.1	✓
Wolverines	90.0%	(45.3%)	44.7%	25.0%	1.7	✓
Long Distance Routes (Goal for FY 2012: 85%)						
Auto Train	85.0%	1.5%	86.5%	(3.4%)	0.5	
California Zephyr	85.0%	(33.4%)	51.6%	10.2%	2.9	✓
Capitol Limited	85.0%	(11.9%)	73.1%	23.8%	2.0	✓
Cardinal	85.0%	(42.0%)	43.0%	4.2%	1.0	✓
City of New Orleans	85.0%	3.1%	88.1%	11.5%	1.5	✓
Coast Starlight	85.0%	(6.0%)	79.0%	2.7%	1.1	✓
Crescent	85.0%	(2.8%)	82.2%	10.2%	0.5	✓
Empire Builder	85.0%	(24.3%)	60.7%	16.9%	(0.6)	
Lake Shore Limited	85.0%	(14.5%)	70.5%	15.1%	1.3	✓
Palmetto	85.0%	(8.0%)	77.0%	2.2%	1.0	✓
Silver Meteor	85.0%	(19.2%)	65.8%	(10.9%)	0.1	
Silver Star	85.0%	(18.2%)	66.8%	(3.5%)	0.8	
Southwest Chief	85.0%	(9.7%)	75.3%	2.0%	(0.1)	
Sunset Limited	85.0%	(17.8%)	67.2%	(12.7%)	2.7	
Texas Eagle	85.0%	(19.2%)	65.8%	10.1%	2.6	✓