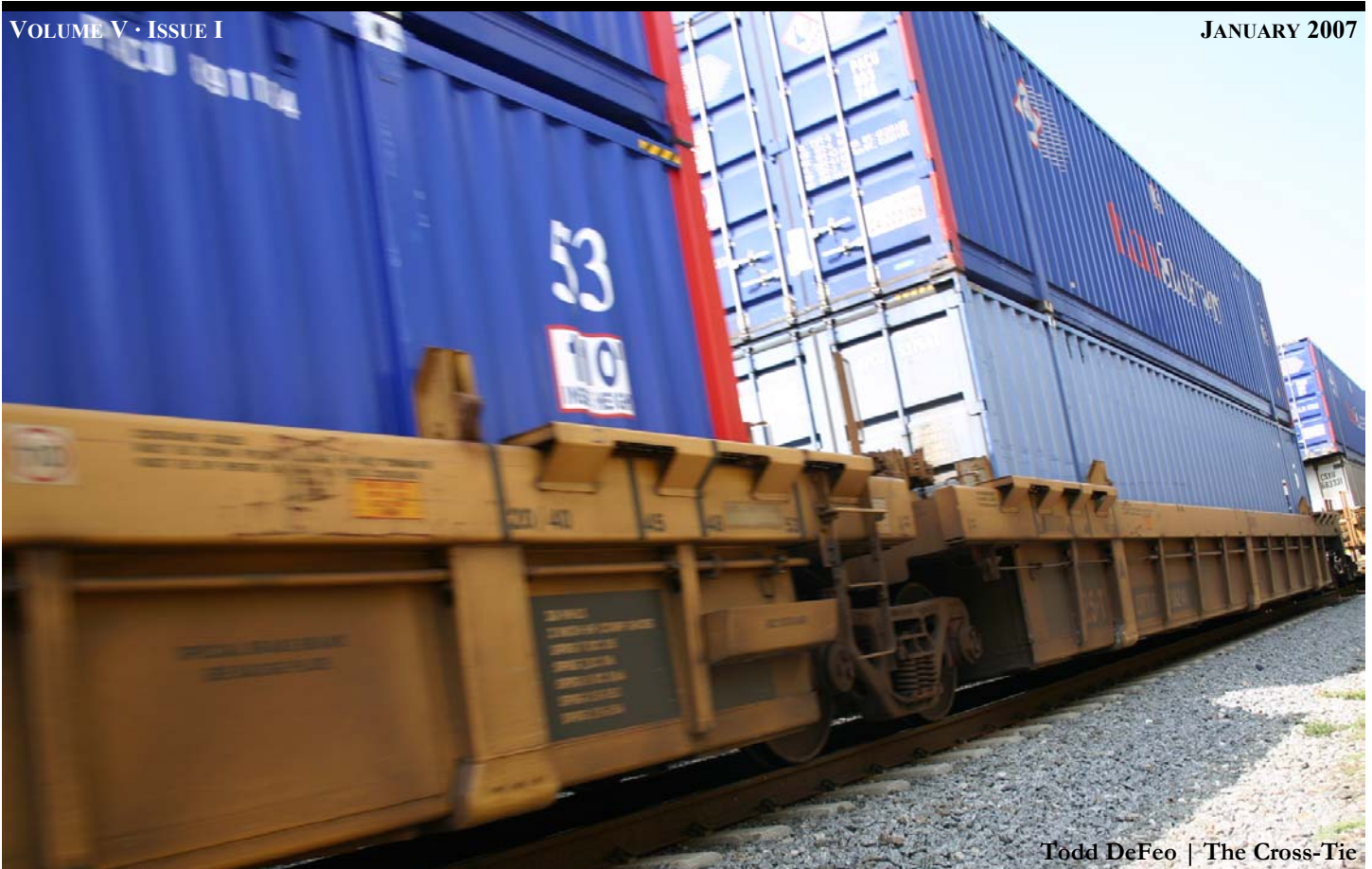


# THE CROSS-TIE

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Todd DeFeo | The Cross-Tie

## 2006: Another Record Year

WASHINGTON — For the ninth consecutive year, total freight volume on U.S. railroads as measured in ton-miles has set an annual record, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) reported.

Meanwhile, for the fifth consecutive year — and the 18th time in the past 20 years — intermodal freight on U.S. railroads has set an annual record, according to the AAR.

Total freight volume for the first 51 weeks of 2006 reached 1.712 trillion ton-miles during the week ended December 23, breaking the 52-week record of 1.696 trillion set during 2005. This year's total was 2.6 percent above the total for the first 51 weeks of 2005.

For just the week ended December 23, total volume was estimated at 34.8 billion ton-miles, up 8.1 percent from last year.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# 2006: ANOTHER RECORD-SETTING YEAR

(Continued from page 1)

Both carload and intermodal volume were also up from last year during the week ended December 23. Carload volume of 338,013 cars was up 6.6 percent from a year ago, with loadings up 8.6 percent in the West and 4.2 percent in the East. Intermodal volume of 233,890 trailers or containers was up 5.5 percent from last year. Container volume was up 10.1 percent, while trailer volume was down 7.5 percent.

Twelve out of 19 carload commodity groups were up from last year, with loadings of coke up 19.0 percent, grain up 17.0 percent and coal up 8.6 percent. On the downside, lumber and wood products were down 18.7 percent and pulp, paper and allied products were off 6.4 percent.

For the first 51 weeks of 2006, carload freight totaled 17,111,268 units, up 1.4 percent from last year, while intermodal volume totaled 12,109,230 trailers or con-

tainers, up 5.2 percent.

On Canadian railroads, during the week ended December 23 carload traffic totaled 73,098 cars, down 0.8 percent from last year while intermodal volume of 45,454 trailers or containers was up 6.7 percent from last year.

Cumulative originations for the first 51 weeks of 2006 on the Canadian railroads totaled 3,790,431 carloads, down 1.8 percent from last year, and 2,326,260 trailers and containers, up 5.1 percent from 2005.

Combined cumulative volume for the first 51 weeks of 2006 on 13 reporting U.S. and Canadian railroads totaled 20,901,699 carloads, up 0.8 percent from last year and 14,435,490 trailers and containers, up 5.2 percent from last year.

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— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## 2006 In Review

From langurs in the New Delhi subways to industry changes brought on by terrorism, relive the highs and lows of the railroad industry in 2006, another unforgettable year. To look back at the year's top headlines, turn to page 4.

# NORFOLK SOUTHERN AGREES TO SETTLEMENT IN GRANITEVILLE LAWSUIT

GRANITEVILLE, S.C. — Norfolk Southern is asking a federal judge to approve a class settlement to a lawsuit filed after a Jan. 6, 2005, derailment that left nine people dead.

The Norfolk, Va.-based company filed a motion in South Carolina federal court proposing a settlement that "would provide varying levels of compensation for people who were injured and who received medical treatment or were hospitalized as a result of the derailment and subsequent release of chlorine," the railroad said in a news release.

On Jan. 6, 2005, a northbound Norfolk Southern Railway freight train encountered an improperly lined switch that diverted the train from the main line onto an industry track where it struck an unoccupied, parked train.

Among the derailed cars were three tank cars containing chlorine, one of which was breached, releasing chlorine gas. The train

engineer and eight other people died as a result of chlorine gas inhalation.

The settlement agreement, which is subject to court approval, is for claims that were not part of a previous class settlement approved last year covering property damage, evacuation expenses and losses and minor personal injuries, the railroad said.

Norfolk Southern reached the agreement with plaintiffs' counsel in October and now has finalized the details.

The NTSB determined that a train crew that passed through the area earlier failed to reline a switch back to the mainline after using it, leading to the subsequent and unexpected diversion of the train that derailed.

The Board also concluded that had the conductor of the first train held a comprehensive job briefing at the industry track, as required by NS operating rules, the crew may have attended to the main line switch, and the accident may not have occurred.

Contributing to the accident was the absence of any feature that would have reminded crewmembers of the switch position. Post-accident inspections revealed that the switch was lined and locked for the industry track, as it had been when the first train used the switch on the evening prior to the wreck.

Investigators noted there was no evidence of tampering and no other trains used the track in the area from the time the first train's crew left until the wreck. The Board stated that contributing to the severity of the accident was the puncture of the ninth car, a tank car containing chlorine.

The chlorine gas release occurred when the shell of the ninth car on the train was punctured by the coupler of the 11th car. Metallurgical examination of the damage on the shell around the puncture documented several impression marks on the shell that matched damage found on projecting surfaces of the coupler.

## WRECK ROUNDUP

Here's a quick look at some of the wrecks from the past month:

ARLINGTON, Va. – The National Transportation Safety Board has sent two investigators here to investigate an accident involving two Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) employees.

An empty train on the Yellow Line struck the employees, fatally injuring one and seriously injuring the other.

The employees, both Metro track inspectors, were struck by a four-car Yellow Line train on an elevated track between the Huntington and Eisenhower Ave Metrorail stations at 9:30 a.m. Nov. 30.

Leslie A. Cherry, a 29-year veteran employee from Maryland, died while conducting routine track inspection along the rail line. The injured worker, who is in critical condition at a local hospital, has been a Metro employee since April 2006.

Metro is conducting an internal investigation, and is cooperating with the National Transportation Safety Board on its independent investigation.

The Yellow Line train (No. 307) involved in the incident was leaving the Huntington station and heading into the Alexandria rail yard. There were no passengers aboard the train because it was not in service.

– *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## UP TESTING EXPERIMENTAL LOCOMOTIVE EXHAUST FILTER

OAKLAND, Calif. – Union Pacific Railroad has begun a year-long test in Oakland railyards to determine if an experimental after market exhaust system filter will reduce diesel engine emissions in older railroad locomotives. “Our goal is to find innovative methods of further reducing exhaust emissions to create a better environment,” said Bob Grimaila, Union Pacific’s vice president for environment and safety.

A 1,500-horsepower yard locomotive built in November 1982 has been retrofitted with diesel particulate filters or “DPFs.”

The DPF initiative is the result of a four-year program, funded in part by Union Pacific, to assess exhaust after market technologies for locomotive applications. The DPF uses high-temperature silicon carbide blocks to trap particulate matter in the exhaust. As gases containing the carbon particles accumulate, the device periodically heats the carbon, causing it to ignite and burn off as carbon dioxide.

The diesel engine has been outfitted with various sensors that can remotely monitor, with the help of Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology, in real-time the engine and DPF system operation. Remote real-time monitoring capability helps researchers evaluate how the engine and the experimental filters are functioning. Its emissions performance and the maintenance requirements for the locomotive will be assessed at the end of the one-year test period.

The locomotive was subjected to EPA locomotive standards testing before and after the DPF was installed, using standard

EPA non-road diesel fuel and ultra-low sulfur diesel (ULSD) fuel that UP is now using for intrastate locomotives in California. During static testing, particulate emissions were reduced 80 percent when the DPF was installed.

Union Pacific will also begin a year-long field test in the Los Angeles area of the North America rail industry’s first long-haul diesel electric locomotive modified with after market experimental technology aimed at reducing hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide and particulate exhaust emissions.

Currently, about 50 percent of Union Pacific’s more than 8,200-unit locomotive fleet is certified under existing EPA Tier 0, Tier 1 or Tier 2 regulations governing air emissions. That gives Union Pacific the most environmentally friendly locomotive fleet in the nation.

Union Pacific has tested, and is acquiring, two types of environmentally friendly low-horsepower rail yard locomotives: The Gen-set locomotive and the Green Goat, a yard engine.

The Green Goat uses state-of-the-art diesel-battery hybrid-technology designed to cut air emissions by 80 percent and reduce diesel fuel use by 40 percent compared to conventional diesel-powered locomotives.

The switcher locomotive is powered with large banks of batteries. When energy stored in the batteries is depleted to a pre-set level, a small, low-emission diesel engine automatically starts to power a generator that recharges the batteries.

– *PRNewswire-FirstCall*

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# 2006: THE RAILROAD YEAR IN REVIEW

Like any other year, 2006 saw its fair share of ups and downs for the railroad industry.

Some stories were hard to list in a particular month. The controversy over the Duluth, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad's federal loan is a good example, and could probably make a good argument for "Story of the Year."

Because of the difficulty, DM&E-related entries might not be found in every month, but its importance as a story in 2006 is not overlooked.

While it is impossible to list every story that impacted the railroad world in 2006, here is a rundown of some of the top railroad headlines for 2006:

## January 2006

CSX resumes local freight service on its Gulf Coast Line, a vital transportation artery to New Orleans. The line was shut down following Hurricane Katrina.

A passenger train carrying at least 250 people, many of whom were children, derailed in Serbia-Montenegro and crashed into a ravine. Nearly 200 people were injured and 44 were killed in the wreck. Most of the passengers were schoolchildren returning from a ski trip.

## February 2006

William Thomas Rice, a decorated soldier and railroad visionary who was instrumental in the 1980 creation of CSX Corp., died in Richmond, Va., on Feb. 5 after a brief illness. He was 93. Rice, chairman emeritus of Seaboard Coast Line Industries Inc., a predecessor company of CSX Corp., began his railroad career in 1934 with the Pennsylvania Railroad. He rose from track supervisor to lead railroads that today are part of CSX Transportation Inc.

## March 2006

The federal government announced it was testing new safety devices for commuter trains that are designed to better protect passengers during crashes. The systems include crush zones that absorb the force of a crash to better protect the parts of trains where passengers seating areas and opera-

tors' spaces. The crush zones have stronger end frames that act as bumpers to distribute crash forces throughout an entire train so passengers feel less of the impact.

With a nod to its 175-year history, Norfolk Southern Corporation saluted its most successful year ever in its Annual Report.

At Belle Plaine, Kan., BNSF Railway Company announces a major safety milestone, the closure of its 3,000th grade crossing

Rail service between Iran and Pakistan was suspended after five rocket attacks against the rail line during a 10-day period. Trains had been running between Zahedan, Iran, and Quetta, Pakistan. The bi-weekly passenger service and the weekly freight service was the only rail service between the two counties, according to *The Associated Press*.

## April 2006

Thomas P. Schmidt of Jacksonville, Fla., a 35-year railroad veteran, is appointed to head Amtrak's Transportation Department.

After a 60-year absence, trolleys rolled once again on downtown Cleveland streets, offering a way to experience the city's past. Beginning April 10, office workers and tourists were able to hop on one of two trolley lines developed by RTA to replace Loop bus service.

## May 2006

From Washington D.C. to New York City, trains powered by overhead electric lines stalled for more than two hours May 25 due to what Amtrak called a "major power outage."

## June 2006

A comprehensive federal study of accident data found that push-pull passenger rail service has an excellent safety record and that a train being pushed has virtually no greater likelihood of derailling after a high-way-rail grade crossing collision than one with a locomotive in the lead, the Federal Railroad Administration said.

Union Pacific introduced the latest addition to its Heritage Series of locomotives – the Denver & Rio Grande Western locomotive. Incorporating historic colors and graphic elements of the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, the new locomotive pays tribute to the men and women of the railroad that "went everywhere the hard way."

## July 2006

Seven bombs exploded at various railway stations in Bombay on July 11. An alleged member of the Kashmiri militant group Lashkar-e-Toiba was arrested by Indian police in connection with the July 11 train bombings in Bombay which killed 200 commuters on the city's commuter rail network.

The first trains operated over the Qinghai-Tibet Railway line, the world's highest line. The road, connecting the Tibetan capital Lhasa with Golmud in Qinghai, China, is quite controversial. At its highest point in the Tanggula Pass, the railway line reaches an altitude of 16,640 feet. Because of the height, the train's cabins are supplied with oxygen and the windows have ultra-violet filters to keep out the sun's glare. The line is not without controversy, though. Critics claim that the railway will be used to assert control over Tibet as the line can quickly transport Chinese troops to Tibet during unrest.

Atlanta's mass transit system posted its first operating profit in nine years. For fiscal year 2005-06, MARTA finished in the black by \$19 million, *The Associated Press* reported. Officials have expected an \$18 million loss.

## August 2006

News of a disrupted terror plot quickly translated to increased security measures at rail systems nationwide.

Calling it the most significant development in railroad brake technology since the 1870s, Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph H. Boardman said he was proposing revised federal rail safety regulations to

# 2006: THE RAILROAD YEAR IN REVIEW

facilitate the installation of Electronically Controlled Pneumatic (ECP) brake systems capable of preventing derailments and shortening train-stopping distances.

The U.S. Surface Transportation Board approved Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern's application to utilize a separate subsidiary to build and operate a new 280-mile rail line into the Powder River Basin.

Commuter rail in Florida is one step closer to reality, as Gov. Jeb Bush has announced a comprehensive plan aimed at improving freight service and bringing commuter rail to Central Florida. Under the agreement in principle between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and CSX Transportation Inc. (CSXT), Florida will invest \$491 million to improve infrastructure and expand capacity on two existing rail lines, one of which will be used to establish commuter rail service through a multi-county stretch in the region.

New Delhi authorities hoped a fierce looking primate — a langur — would solve the problem of mischievous monkeys infiltrating the city's subway system. Langurs were brought in to scare away their smaller cousins.

## September 2006

A Transrapid maglev train traveling on the system's test track in Lathen near the Netherlands border in Germany collided with a maintenance vehicle on the track, killing 23 people and severely injuring 10. The driverless train was estimated as operating at above 120 mph when the crash occurred. The unmanned train with 31 passengers aboard crashed into a maintenance wagon containing 2 workers.

The collision of a freight train and a passenger train just north of Cairo in the town of Shebin al-Qanater left five dead and injured another 30.

## October 2006

Potentially serious train derailments might be averted as a result of a new federal regulation designed to improve how railroads conduct safety inspections of the

joints that connect sections of track made of continuous welded rail (CWR), the Federal Railroad Administration said. Unlike conventional track that has short sections of rail bolted together, CWR consists of long ribbons of rail that may extend for a mile or more between joints. Inspections of CWR joints are expected to increase by at least 11 percent per year as a result of the rule. Under the new regulation, for most areas where CWR is used, railroads are required to inspect CWR joints at specified intervals up to four times a year based upon track speeds, the amount of train traffic on the line, and whether passenger trains operate over the tracks.

Gov. Mitt Romney earlier this month directed the MBTA to re-institute regular random bag inspections on the public transit system in order to shake up normal routines and make it more difficult to plan and carry out a potential terrorist act. The MBTA conducted random bag searches for a limited time before and during the Democratic National Convention in 2004.

A successful rail police pilot in the Western Cape, South Africa, was implemented nationwide. South African Transport Minister Joseph Radebe said the program, which reportedly resulted in a 68 percent overall decline in crime on trains and in railway stations, was to be implemented throughout South Africa by 2008. More than 5,000 officers will be deployed in railway stations and on trains.

BNSF and CSX announce plans to create a high-volume rail corridor for reliable intermodal services on the lines connecting California, Atlanta and the rest of the fast-growing Southeast Region.

Passenger and commuter rail cars will be required to have more emergency safety features, including additional window exits, under proposed regulations announced by Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph H. Boardman.

## November 2006

Six people were killed Nov. 20, and more than 80 people were injured when a bomb

exploded on a passenger train near Belacoba, India, a station located about 345 miles north of Calcutta. Authorities suspect terrorists planted a bomb in one of the train's cars.

Amtrak announced passenger ticket revenue increased in Fiscal Year 2006 to \$1.37 billion, the highest annual ticket revenue ever achieved, and, at \$132 million over last year, the railroad's largest year-over-year increase. The railroad also served 24.3 million passengers — nearly 300,000 more than for the same trains in the previous fiscal year.

The French postal service La Poste reached agreement with SNCF, the national rail company, to create a joint rail-based high-speed courier service.

## December 2006

As part of an ongoing effort to target the highest risks and major causes of train accidents, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is releasing a study which provides a strong scientific rationale for evaluating railroad employee work schedules to address worker fatigue. Human factor errors are responsible for nearly 40 percent of all train accidents over the past five years. An FRA evaluation of the research findings confirms that fatigue plays a role in approximately one out of four of those accidents.

The Department of Homeland Security proposed new rules it said would vastly strengthen the security of the nation's rail systems in the highest threat urban areas.

The Federal Railroad Administration says it wants to increase civil penalties assessed against railroads for violating numerous federal rail safety regulations.

After months of extensive testing, N.J. Transit placed the first multilevel train into service for customers on the Northeast Corridor between Trenton, N.J., and New York.

— Compiled by Todd DeFeo, with Wikinews and Railfanning.org News Wire.



# DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY EMPLOYEE HOSTS INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS ON TRAIN

FORT BELVOIR, Va. – The luxury railroad car Pennsylvania has seen its fair share of two things: precious cargo and the Army-Navy football rivalry.

In 1961 the red Pennsylvania Railroad business car carried John F. Kennedy from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C., along a temporary rail line put in place for the gridiron classic. Kennedy chose to take the car to the annual football game again in 1962.

This year, the Pennsylvania carried more than one guest of honor as it began a familiar trip Dec. 6 from Washington's Union Station to the 107th Army-Navy game.

The car was part of "Liberty Limited 2006," an 18-car vintage train filled with wounded Soldiers, Sailors and Marines from Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington and Bethesda Naval Hospital in Maryland, who all dined in style during the trip.

Philadelphia native and Pennsylvania railroad car owner Bennett Levin credits his wife Vivian with coming up with the idea. Startled by news reports of injured troops returning from war, the couple decided to express gratitude for their service.

Invoking their enthusiasm for vintage locomotives, the Levins worked tirelessly in coordination with Amtrak, Conrail and more than a dozen railroad car owners from all across the United States. They wanted to revive the tradition of temporary rail lines across the country established to bring fans to the game.

Eighteen railroad car owners volunteered their services to create a first-class experience for the 132 injured service members as they traveled from Washington to Philadelphia to attend the game. Eric Levin, the Levins' son and a Conrail engineer, operated the locomotive leading the train to its destination.

Defense Logistics Agency employee John Deasy, a Navy reservist and railcar owner, emphasized that the focus of the day was solely on the service members aboard.

"The first priority is the recuperating wounded veterans themselves," he said, quoting Levin. "It's about them." Along

with the help of former DLA employee Joe Maloney, Deasy offered top-notch service to the 11 Soldiers on his car, the Mount Vernon.

The service members aboard the Liberty Limited 2006 made an immediate impression on the volunteer staff.

"All the guys were extraordinarily positive," said Army Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Lane, who volunteered along with several other members of his family. "One Marine named Mike lost both eyes to a bomb blast, but he is one of the most inspiring guys to be around. He's the kind of guy who lights up a room by walking in."

Charles Jensen, Lane's brother-in-law, remembered Cpl. Michael Jergin from the 2005 maiden voyage of the Liberty Limited. This year, Jergin traveled from Florida to attend the game.

"The best thing about Mike was to be able to see how far he has come since last year, physically and mentally, and to talk with him about all of the things he is doing with his life," said Jensen, whose railcar was also part of the Liberty Limited 2006 train.

When the train arrived at Greenwich railroad yard, members of the Philadelphia Police Department were waiting to escort Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority buses to Lincoln Financial Field, where Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, in one of his last public appearances, took the time to individually greet and embrace each injured service member who entered the stadium.

Lane said the group received a heroes' reception.

"It was very emotional, with lots of happiness, pride and patriotism," he said. "I think these troops realized how much their sacrifices were appreciated."

Wrapped in jackets and blankets embroidered with the Liberty Limited logo, the service members and medical support staff cheered on the game from their seats on the 50-yard line. Bennett Levin, chuckling, recalled Jergin, who sat in the Army section waving a big Marine flag he had taken from the train and attached to his walking stick.

Jack's Deli, a Philadelphia caterer, donated lunch for patients who had to remain on the train during the game. Jim Daly, a New Jersey state trooper, donated an additional 200 embroidered shirts and hats for each Walter Reed and Bethesda patient from Iraq and Afghanistan who was not well enough attend the event.

"He didn't want them to feel that their injuries precluded them from having participated," Levin said.

"I was happy to find that the whole thing was arranged by a bunch of donors who weren't concerned about credit or publicity," said Lane. Despite Levin's request that no members of the press or politicians participate in the event, the Liberty Limited received enough donations, many anonymous, to serve all of the crew and support staff who made the event possible.

The volunteers aboard the Liberty Limited 2006 appreciated the opportunity to honor the sacrifice and service of their injured passengers.

"A Soldier named David lost a significant piece of his arm to an improvised explosive device," Lane said. "I will never forget the look of absolute happiness he kept on his face as he walked around what we found out was his first train ride."

Levin recalled the mother of a Marine who had recently returned from Iraq and approached his wife toward the end of the trip.

"This makes me think people do care, after all," she said, embracing Vivian Levin. "This is the gift that keeps on giving," her husband added.

With the 108th annual Army-Navy football game scheduled to occur at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, the Liberty Limited will remain at the Juniata Terminal Co. facility for now. The Levins have not yet decided whether they will run the special train for next year's match up.

Headquartered at Fort Belvoir, Va., DLA provides supply support, and technical and logistics services to the U.S. military services and several federal civilian agencies. More information about DLA is available at <http://www.dla.mil/>.

– PRNewswire

# INATTENTIVENESS BLAMED FOR 2005 WRECK

WASHINGTON – An engineer's inattentiveness to signal indications and his failure to operate the train in accordance with the signal indications and speed restrictions is probable cause of a September 2005 Metra derailment, the National Transportation Safety Board determined.

Contributing to the Sept. 17, 2005 derailment of Northeast Illinois Regional Commuter Railroad Corp. (Metra) train No. 504 in Chicago was lack of recognition by Metra of the risk posed by the significant difference between track speed and crossover speed at the accident location and its inaction to reduce that risk through additional operational safety procedures and other means. Also, contributing to this wreck was the lack of a positive train con-

trol system.

"This is another example of a tragic accident that could have been prevented if the train was equipped with a positive train control system," said NTSB Chairman Mark V. Rosenker. "The system would have prevented overspeed through the crossover by overriding the engineer's failure to slow the train."

Train No. 504 departed Joliet, Ill., traveling eastbound on track two to downtown Chicago. Track two is designated by Metra as a class four track with a maximum operating speed of 70 mph for passenger train between milepost 7.0 and milepost 3.9.

The train, operating in a push mode from a cab control car at the lead end, was traveling 69 mph at milepost 4.7 as it entered a

crossover from track two to track one when a locomotive and five cars derailed. There were 117 injuries and two fatalities.

Signal data logs indicate that when train 504 passed the signal at 53rd Street, the signal was displaying an approach diverging indication and that the next signal at CP 48th Street was displaying a diverging clear indication, which tells the train engineer to proceed on a diverging route at prescribed speed through the turnout. The prescribed maximum operating speed, which is intended to provide for a safe transition through the crossover was 10 mph.

Post accident inspection of the train's seats by the Safety Board showed some of the seats had sustained extensive damage.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

# DHS TARGETS RAIL'S HIGH RISK MATERIALS

WASHINGTON – The Department of Homeland Security is proposing new rules it says will vastly strengthen the security of the nation's rail systems in the highest threat urban areas.

The proposed rule is part of a package of new security measures that will require freight rail carriers to ensure 100 percent positive hand-off of Toxic Inhalation Hazard (TIH) materials, establish security protocols for custody transfers of TIH rail cars in the high threat urban areas, and appoint a rail security coordinator to share information with the federal government, as well as formalizing the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) freight and passenger rail inspection authority.

"A toxic emission from an attack against a chemical facility or hazardous chemicals in transit is among the most serious risks facing America's highest threat areas," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "We're going to take a significant percentage of that risk off the table."

The freight rail industry has already begun to implement several key security measures, such as tracking and substantially reducing the standstill time for unattended freight cars transporting TIH materials in high threat urban areas, developing site-specific security plans with access controls and providing security training for

employees, according to DHS. Using industry data, TSA will create a tracking system that will allow the federal government to determine the location of rail cars carrying TIH materials within minutes.

"Although we have not had the opportunity to review the DHS proposed rules, the nation's major railroads have a demonstrated commitment to security and believe that keeping hazardous materials secure will continue to require active involvement and close cooperation among all the players in the logistics chain," Edward R. Hamberger, president and CEO of the Association of American Railroads said.

"Railroads, for example, do not own the tank cars used to ship highly hazardous chemicals. Tank car owners, chemical shippers, chemical users and railroads each play a critical role in the transportation of hazardous materials."

Once finalized, the proposed rule will address the transport of TIH materials by rail, from start to finish, including predictable standstill points and unpredictable stops during shipment. TIH materials, which are potentially harmful but essential chemicals like chlorine or anhydrous ammonia, represent less than 1 percent of all rail shipments.

In addition to this proposed rule, the Department of Transportation is introducing a

proposed regulation that will require railroads to analyze safety and security concerns when determining the route for a freight train carrying certain types of hazardous materials.

TSA has the authority to impose up to \$10,000 in fines per security violation, per day.

"The nation's railroad industry strongly supports efforts to increase security and was one of the very first to develop, fund and implement an industry-wide security plan after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11," Hamberger said. "Unlike other industries, railroads are required by the federal government to carry the hazardous materials that are currently the focus of the Department of Homeland Security."

Meanwhile, the Teamsters say the proposed rules ignore necessary employee training and protections against employer retaliation, Teamsters say.

"The White House has failed again to recognize that the true eyes and ears of the rail system are its employees," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "Our members are working on the rails night and day. They know about the security lapses on the rails, yet the railroads refuse to provide quality training for them in preparation for emergencies."

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*



## FRA Proposes Higher Fines for Violations of Federal Rail Safety Regulations

WASHINGTON – The civil penalty guideline amounts assessed against railroads for violating numerous federal rail safety regulations would be substantially increased under a proposal announced by Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph H. Boardman.

“Higher fines across all categories of federal regulations will encourage railroads to focus on safety compliance and improve the rail industry’s overall performance,” Boardman stated, noting that the proposed statements of agency policy would double the current guideline civil penalty amounts for most violations.

Boardman explained that FRA evaluated each of the more than 2,000 provisions of the federal rail safety regulations using a five-point severity scale. The measure takes into consideration the likelihood that a rail accident or graver consequences will occur as a result of failing to comply with a particular section of the regulations.

At the low end of the scale, the guideline penalty amount would be \$1,500. At the high end of the scale where a violation is extremely likely to result in an accident or incident, the guideline penalty amount would be \$8,500. Willful violations would range from \$2,500 to \$11,000.

The current statutory maximum of \$27,000 for grossly negligent violations or for pat-

terns of repeated violations that have caused an imminent hazard of death or injury, or have caused death or injury to individuals would remain unchanged.

– *Special to The Cross-Tie*

## Norfolk Southern Announces Planned Capital Spending

NORFOLK, Va. – Norfolk Southern Corp. plans to spend \$1.34 billion in 2007 for capital improvements to its railroad operations and subsidiaries, the company announced.

The anticipated spending includes \$884 million for roadway projects, \$401 million for equipment and \$55 million for small projects and real estate.

In roadway improvements, the largest expenditure will be \$610 million for rail, crosstie, ballast and bridge programs, including \$73 million in infrastructure investments for increased capacity. In addition, \$47 million is allotted for communications, signal and electrical projects; \$41 million for maintenance of way equipment; and \$16 million for environmental projects and public improvements such as grade crossing separations and crossing signal upgrades.

Equipment spending includes \$321 million to purchase 53 six-axle locomotives and upgrade existing locomotives. NS will invest in the purchase of 1,300 new higher-capacity coal cars as part of a multiyear program to replace the existing coal car fleet. Other equipment spending includes purchasing 739 freight cars as their leases

expire, certifying and rebuilding 388 multilevel automobile racks, and adding supplemental restraints to multilevel racks.

In addition, equipment spending includes \$60 million for projects related to computers, systems and information technology which will enhance safety and improve operating efficiency and equipment utilization.

The budget contains business development initiatives totaling \$97 million, including investments in intermodal terminals and equipment to add capacity to the intermodal network, increased access and capacity for coal traffic, bulk transfer facilities, and vehicle production and distribution facilities.

– *PRNewswire-FirstCall*

## Union Pacific: Moving Record Trainloads of Coal

OMAHA, Neb. – With winter energy needs nearing their peak, Union Pacific is moving record trainloads of coal from Wyoming’s Southern Powder River Basin (SPRB) and coal-producing mines in Colorado and Utah.

During November, Union Pacific moved 20 million tons of coal from the SPRB and Colorado and Utah, an increase of nearly 8 percent over November 2005. The railroad posted its third best average daily performance in the SPRB, averaging 35.7 trains per day. The movement of Colorado and Utah coal posted its best daily train numbers of the year in November, averaging 11.6 trains per day.

Union Pacific also set train size records during the months of October and November. UP trains moving coal out of the SPRB averaged 15,135 tons each – an increase of 200 tons over last year’s annual average. A new wheel-changing process at Bailey Yard in North Platte, Neb., helped UP achieve the increased tonnage record.

Wheels are changed without removing cars from a train, saving handling and processing time. The enhancement has the potential to increase train tonnage out of the SPRB by more than 750,000 tons next year with no additional train starts.

Additional rail line improvements are expected to boost the railroad’s coal capacity in 2007. The completion of a third main line south of Reno Junction, Wyo., and five new train landing tracks just completed at the mines will help boost capacity on the Joint Line owned by UP and BNSF to more than 375 million tons. During 2006 the Joint Line is expected to support more than 350 million tons of coal.

– *PRNewswire-FirstCall*

## FreightCar America Delivers 100,000th Aluminum Railcar

DANVILLE, Ill. – During a ceremony here, FreightCar America delivered the 100,000th aluminum railcar produced by the company.

The milestone car, a BethGon II railcar for carrying coal, was part of an order totaling 2,695 cars for NRG Energy, Inc. of Princeton, N.J.

– *Business Wire*





# NEWS FROM THE RAILS

## QUICK HITS FROM AROUND THE PASSENGER RAILROAD INDUSTRY

### **FRA, New Jersey Transit Begin Study of Portal Bridge**

WASHINGTON — Public comments are being sought for a project to replace, repair, or retain a 96-year-old railroad bridge on the heavily congested Northeast Corridor connecting the Newark, N.J., and New York.

The Federal Railroad Administration and New Jersey Transit will jointly prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS), in cooperation with Amtrak, to study improvements to enhance capacity and operation of the Amtrak-owned Portal Bridge that spans the Hackensack River. Originally constructed in 1910, the bridge is nearing the end of its projected lifespan, officials say.

Among the Portal Bridge options under consideration: retaining the existing structure and building a new bridge with two or three additional tracks; modifying the existing bridge to improve its safety and possibly adding a second bridge as well; and removing the Portal Bridge altogether and replacing it.

The FRA, New Jersey Transit and Amtrak will evaluate the potential effects of each alternative on the surrounding social, economic and physical environment, with a focus on ecology, historic value, aesthetics, as well as transportation and air quality, Boardman explained.

Earlier this year, the N.J. Transit Board of Directors awarded a \$3.3 million contract to New York-based AKRF Inc. to determine how best to increase rail capacity at the two-

track swing bridge, which carries the Northeast Corridor over the Hackensack River just west of Secaucus Junction.

Public comment on the scope of the EIS, including the range of alternatives considered and environmental issues or concerns will be accepted through Jan. 31.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

### **First Multilevel Trains Appear on Northeast Corridor**

NEWARK, NJ — N.J. Transit's first multilevel train debuted Dec. 11 on the Northeast Corridor, culminating four years of planning and design—including extensive input from customers—to offer riders a new level of comfort and convenience.

Following a ceremonial ribbon-cutting, Transportation Commissioner Kris Kolluri welcomed state and local officials, guests and commuters aboard the new multilevel train for an inaugural trip from Trenton Station to New York. The trainset, representing Northeast Corridor Train 3844, departed Trenton at 12 p.m. and made all local stops en route.

The fleet of 234 multilevel rail cars will enable N.J. Transit to meet and anticipate ridership demand on its busiest rail lines, while providing an unprecedented level of comfort for customers.

By this spring, Bombardier Transportation is expected to deliver to N.J. Transit 18 additional multilevel cars for service. Beginning next fall, multilevel trains will begin operating

on the Morris & Essex and North Jersey Coast lines. The manufacturer is expected to deliver all 234 cars by the end of 2008.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

### **MBTA Plans 'Ambitious' Infrastructure Improvements**

BOSTON — Targeting its capital spending at investments that lead to a direct and practical impact on public transit users, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has rolled out an "ambitious yet carefully crafted plan" for major service and infrastructure improvements, officials said.

Funded through the five-year Capital Investment Program, many of the proposed projects are specifically designed to not only remedy some existing problems, but also provide the customer service enhancements necessary to attract new riders to the MBTA.

In releasing the plan to the public for review and comment, MBTA General Manager Daniel A. Grabauskas said the proposed \$332 million in new investments place a strong emphasis on accessibility, reliability, and safety. "Some of the projects may not be glamorous, but they'll certainly help position us as a modernized public transit system delivering convenient and dependable services," said Grabauskas. More than 90 percent of MBTA capital dollars are to be re-investment in the transit system's existing infrastructure.

The list of new projects and initiatives to be funded in the

MBTA's 'rolling' five-year Capital Investment Program include: \$29 million for the final design and construction of a permanent bus maintenance facility at the Arborway in Jamaica Plain and \$6.5 million for accessibility improvements at three Green Line stations, including Longwood Station, which serves many of the city's major health care institutions.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

### **L.A. Metro Finishes Boring Tunnels for Line Extension**

LOS ANGELES — Metro construction crews on Dec. 9 finished boring the twin 1.7-mile tunnels for the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension.

"Vicki", one of two massive tunnel boring machines (TBM) completed boring the westbound tunnel at the East Portal in Boyle Heights.

"Lola," her TBM twin, finished burrowing the eastbound tunnel Nov. 14. Tunneling operations began last February at First and Boyle streets and moved underground to First and Lorena streets.

Lola and Vicki were custom-built in Germany at a cost of \$10 million each.

The tunnels are part of a six-mile extension of the Metro Gold Line from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles through the Little Tokyo/Arts District, Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles. Eight new stations, including two underground, will be constructed.

The light rail extension is schedule to open in late 2009.

— *Special to The Cross-Tie*

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## 2006: A RECORD YEAR FOR TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION MARKET, ARTBA TOP ECONOMIST SAYS

WASHINGTON – The 2006 U.S. transportation construction market was the most robust in more than 20 years with the value of work on highways, bridges, airports and transit systems up 15 percent over the last year, according to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

Fueled by increased federal, state and local highway investments, a \$2.3 billion congressional appropriation for repair work on highways damaged by Hurricane Katrina and greater investments in freight rail, the total value of construction performed on transportation projects is expected to hit a record \$106 billion in 2006, up from \$92 billion in 2005, says

ARTBA Vice President of Economics and Research Dr. William Buechner.

Highway and bridge construction provided much of the driving force for the 2006 growth.

Some of the increased spending reflected higher construction costs, particularly for asphalt, cement and aggregates.

Buechner forecasts modest growth in the range of one to two percent for the U.S. highway and bridge construction market in 2007.

The value of subway and light rail construction has hovered around \$3.5 billion for the last five years. A number of major projects are in line for federal financing in Fiscal

Year 2007, but the impact on construction probably won't occur until 2008 and later.

ARTBA expects no breakout from the \$3.5 billion construction level in 2007.

Meanwhile, the value of freight rail construction work is on track to total \$7.9 billion in 2006, up more than 20 percent from \$6.6 billion in 2005. Rail construction is largely privately financed and is driven by the volume of freight traffic.

As long as the economy keeps growing, this market should also grow, according to ARTBA.

ARTBA represents the U.S. transportation construction industry in the Nation's Capital.

– U.S. Newswire