



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Memorandum

Subject: **INFORMATION**: Audit Announcement –
Effects of Amtrak's Poor On-Time Performance
Project No. 07C3005C000

Date: July 17, 2007

From: David Tornquist 
Assistant Inspector General
for Competition and Economic Analysis

Reply to JA-50
Attn of:

To: Federal Railroad Administrator

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2006, average on-time performance (OTP) across Amtrak's long-distance routes was only 30%. For Amtrak's corridor routes, average OTP was much higher, but still only 67% (excluding the Northeast Corridor). In FY 2007, the OTP of a number of long-distance routes increased substantially, but only enough to raise the average for long-distance routes to 42%. The reliability and timeliness of passenger rail largely determines its viability as an alternative means of transportation. At a minimum, poor OTP may have significant negative impacts on Amtrak's financial condition. In addition, it may undermine Amtrak's ability to retain and grow ridership.

In response to a request from the Surface Transportation Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, the Office of Inspector General plans to conduct an audit of the financial impact of Amtrak's poor OTP. The objective of this audit is to produce a quantitative assessment of the financial impact of Amtrak's poor OTP. More specifically, we will estimate both the impact on costs and the revenues lost as a consequence of Amtrak's poor OTP.

The Program Director for this audit is Mitchell Behm and the Project Manager is Betty Krier. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Behm at (202) 366-1995 or Ms. Krier at (202) 366-1422.

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cc: Audit Liaison, OST, M-1
Audit Liaison, FRA, RAD-43
Amtrak Liaison