



# Memorandum

U.S. Department of  
Transportation

Office of the Secretary  
of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Subject: Audit Announcement - Review of FRA's  
Progress in Implementing PRIIA  
Project No. 11C3001C000

Date: February 22, 2011

From: Mitchell Behm   
Assistant Inspector General for Rail,  
Maritime, and Economic Analysis

Reply to JA-50  
Attn of:

To: Federal Railroad Administrator

In 2008, Congress passed the *Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act* (PRIIA) in order to strengthen intercity passenger rail services in the United States. This comprehensive legislation reauthorized Federal appropriations to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), and includes provisions to assist rail stakeholders, including the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), in improving services, operations, and facilities.

Historically, FRA has focused primarily on promoting and overseeing railroad safety and disbursing grants to Amtrak. PRIIA, however, has significantly expanded FRA's responsibilities. These new responsibilities include developing a national rail plan that promotes an integrated and efficient national rail system, the creation of grant programs for High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail, Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance, and Congestion Relief, and other initiatives for improving and promoting intercity passenger rail services.

As required by PRIIA Section 221, we are initiating an audit to assess FRA's implementation of the provisions of this Act. The objectives are to: (1) evaluate FRA's progress in implementing its PRIIA responsibilities; (2) assess the effectiveness of FRA's process for implementing grants, studies, and oversight as required by PRIIA; and (3) determine the impact of PRIIA's implementation on rail stakeholder operations.

Amtrak's Inspector General (IG) will conduct a concurrent assessment of the company's progress in implementing PRIIA's Amtrak-related provisions. For additional information regarding the objectives, scope, and methodology of the

Amtrak IG's assessment, please contact David R. Warren, Assistant Inspector General for Audits at (202) 906-4742.

We have contacted your audit liaison to schedule a formal entrance conference and plan to begin this audit on or around February 24, 2011. The audit will take place at DOT headquarters in Washington, DC and other sites as needed. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me at (202) 366-9970, or Toayoa Aldridge, Program Director, at (202) 366-2081.

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cc: Audit Liaison, OST, M-1  
Audit Liaison, FRA, RAD-41