

NARP's Recommendations for New Law

The NARP Board approved an aggressive series of policy recommendations and funding levels to support the four goals the Board originally approved a few years ago. We are asking Congress to consider these recommendations in developing the passenger train authorization that will succeed the Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA).

PRIIA expires September 30. While a new law likely will not be enacted by then—and Amtrak often has run without an authorization—work done this year could lay the groundwork for what eventually becomes law.

Our platform is visionary, but reflects the direction we believe public policy should take.

This article discusses the first four recommendations.

1. Include a high-performance railroad network in the next surface transportation reauthorization and create a high-performance railroad network account in the Transportation Trust Fund (renamed from the Highway Trust Fund).

- Mobility is the foundation of American prosperity and quality of life. It lets us do our jobs, connect with our family and friends, enjoy life and meet with our elected representatives.
- American mobility preferences are

rapidly changing in significant ways. Americans are turning to trains in record numbers where that choice exists. Rail has been the fastest growing mobility choice for more than a decade. Polls also show public demand for more passenger rail choices.

- Including passenger rail in national mobility policy will bring policy into greater harmony with public demand and voter preferences.

2. Retain the mandate to continue operation of

Continued on page 2

Crowded Trains: The New Normal



Flickr.com user Tricia J. (screen name CaZaTo Ma)

A large Memorial Day weekend crowd lines up to board an Amtrak Wolverine train in Ann Arbor, MI, on May 28, 2013. More people rode Amtrak in July 2013 than in any single month in the railroad's history. Riders of Michigan's trains will enjoy on-board wireless Internet by January, Amtrak and the Michigan Dept. of Transportation announced Aug. 28.

NARP Meets STB Chairman Elliott

NARP Chairman Bob Stewart, his special assistant Larry Scott, and President Ross Capon, met Sept. 9 with Surface Transportation Board (STB) Chairman Daniel R. Elliott III and two of his key staff.

Stewart noted, "The STB plays a key role in the relationship between Amtrak and host railroads. In light of the recent court decision and other threats to passenger rail, I felt this meeting was timely."

The STB was created in 1995 to replace the old Interstate Commerce Commission. At full strength, as it is presently, it has three commissioners; no more than two can be from the same political party.

The STB resolves freight railroad rate and service disputes and reviews proposed railroad mergers. Its web site says, "The STB is decisionally independent, although it is administratively affiliated with the Department of Transportation."

The STB also has significant passenger responsibilities, including resolving disputes about Amtrak's right of access to tracks, and addressing on-time performance problems.

Section 213 of the Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) lets the STB on its own initiative investigate situations where on-time performance drops below 80% for two consecutive quarters, and impose penalties it deems appropriate.

This part of PRIIA was not affected by the court decision invalidating section 207 (Association of American Railroads vs. U.S. DOT, August News, p. 5).

Another part of section 213 does refer back to 207. The court decision—if it stands (see petition for rehearing, p. 4)—would nullify the STB's ability to respond to service quality and on-time performance issues in the metrics and standards that Amtrak and U.S. DOT agreed upon. Service quality issues

Continued on page 4

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

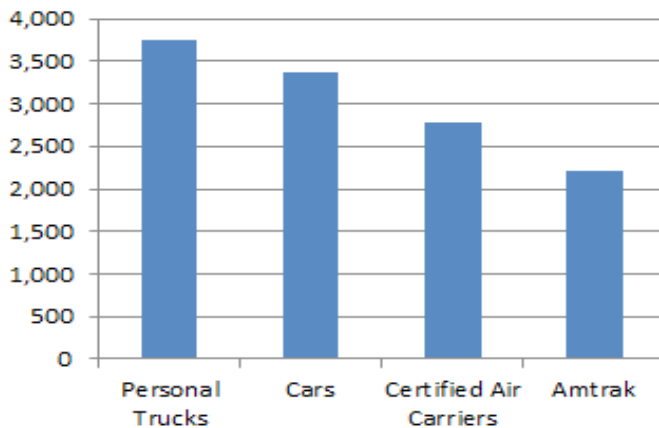
- Amtrak's energy advantage improves 2
- TIGER V grants awarded 3
- Smerk wins NARP Academic Award 3
- Donate your unneeded car 4
- Logan McLeod welcomed to staff 5
- FRA hosts six-state passenger train workshop in Texas 5
- Upcoming events 5
- NARP, Amtrak interns network 6
- Amtrak.com: New look, fare structure 6
- Travelers' Advisory 6



www.facebook.com/narprail

Newest DOE Data: Amtrak's Energy Advantage

Energy Intensities of Travel Modes (Btu per passenger-mile, in 2011)



Source: Oak Ridge National Laboratory, under contract to US Department of Energy

Amtrak is 34.2% more fuel efficient than cars. Amtrak's advantage vs. personal trucks is 41.0% and vs. domestic certified airlines is 17.1%. The personal trucks category includes SUVs and pickups.

These percentages were derived from 2011 data in the latest edition of the annual *Transportation Energy Data Book* produced by Oak Ridge National Laboratory under contract to the U.S.

Department of Energy.

The energy intensity figures measure BTU's (British thermal units) per passenger-mile (one passenger traveling one mile). The smaller the number, the greater the energy efficiency.

When using these numbers to support your case for passenger trains, be sure to note that these figures are "Amtrak actual" and that the numbers would be even more impressive for a properly

NARP News

©2013 National Association of Railroad Passengers. All rights reserved.

505 Capitol Court, NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-7706

(202) 408-8362; fax: (202) 408-8287

narp@narprail.org

www.narprail.org

Robert J. Stewart	Chairman
John Delora	Vice Chair
Albert L. Papp, Jr.	Vice Chair
Arthur Poole	Vice Chair
David Randall	Vice Chair
Stephen J. Salatti	Secretary
Kenneth T. Clifford	Treasurer
Ross B. Capon	President & CEO
Sean Jeans-Gail	Vice President
Malcolm M. Kenton	Director of Outreach & Engagement
James Abram Zumwalt	Coordinator of Resource Development
Logan McLeod	Director of Development
Lawrence E. Scott	Special Assistant to the Chairman

This has news through September 17.
Vol. 47, No. 6 was mailed August 13.

NARP Priorities

a national passenger train system; stress route preservation and efficient expansion.

- Congress will have to provide more, not less, operating support to meet public demand for passenger rail service. A policy that stresses delivering the largest public benefit *per dollar spent* is more in line with voter preferences than simply minimizing total expenditures.
- Route eliminations run counter to what voters want. They reduce the number of markets where passenger rail is a choice. Route eliminations and service reductions seldom produce the expected savings. Once eliminated, routes are costly to restore.

3. Expand the Federal Railroad Administration's responsibility for planning and funding improvements and expansions of the nation's passenger rail system to include coordination

among several states.

- States have a big role in planning and funding services addressing intrastate needs. But states' ability to address *interstate* needs is limited, yet an integrated network is essential to deliver needed public benefits—and seven of every ten intercity trips are interstate. It is unrealistic to expect states to assume all responsibility for planning and funding interstate passenger rail services to meet national mobility needs.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the logical agency to plan and fund interstate services and to coordinate state efforts so they address mobility needs across state lines effectively and efficiently.

4. Encourage use of public/private partnerships to maximize intercity passenger rail investment.

- Where government offers monetary

capitalized, truly modern passenger railroad. ■

The Transportation Energy Data Book, Edition 32 is available at cta.ornl.gov/data

from page 1

incentives that offer the private sector return on investment at reasonable risk, the private sector can bring creativity, innovation and capital.

- The new law, recognizing that passenger rail will not be profitable in the commercial sense without public assistance, should add revenue streams needed to offer profits that would generate private capital investment.
- The most likely sector partners are railroads, real estate developers, equipment manufacturers, service providers and "service managers." An example of the latter: the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority in California, which manages the use of public funds to maximize public benefits per dollar spent. ■

For a list of all 12 recommendations and NARP's four goals, go to www.narprail.org or send NARP a self-addressed stamped envelope.

TIGER V Grants Awarded

Eleven passenger train projects are winners; not the Southwest Chief

The fifth round of TIGER grants recently awarded by the US Department of Transportation included eleven projects involving intercity passenger trains and/or rail transit.

TIGER stands for Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery. Overall, \$474 million was distributed to 52 recipients in 37 states.

Here, in descending-dollar order, are the grants of greatest interest to NARP members:

- Build 11 stations for Kansas City Downtown Streetcar: \$20 million.
- Relocate mainline tracks in Springfield, IL — part of the Chicago-St. Louis high-performance passenger rail corridor: \$14.4 million.
- Replace several timber trestle bridges on the Amtrak *Pacific Surfliner* route in San Diego County: \$14 million.
- South Florida Freight & Passenger Rail Enhancement: \$13.75 million.
- Oklahoma City Intermodal Transportation Hub, serving Amtrak and future commuter and light rail: \$13.6 million
- The second phase of construction of Raleigh Union Station, a multi-modal hub to replace the city's cramped 1950s-era Amtrak station: \$10 million
- Improve & expand New Haven's State Street Station, primarily to accommodate future New Haven-Hartford commuter service: \$10 million.
- Build overpass to separate a Philadelphia-area commuter rail line from a CSX freight line: \$10 million.
- Improve the now state-owned Kalamazoo-Dearborn, MI line to handle passenger trains at up to 110 mph and construct a second main track: \$9.4 million.
- \$9 million for Western Vermont Corridor Rail Rehabilitation to replace nine miles of old jointed rail with welded rail on a Vermont Rail System line that is to host the northward extension of Amtrak's *Ethan Allen Express* from Rutland to Burlington, and will enhance freight service in the meantime (NARP

endorsement in June-July *News*).

Rejected Applications

Garden City, KS applied for \$15 million to replace aging rails and ties to help save the *Southwest Chief* whose continuation is threatened due to reduced or non-existent freight traffic between Newton, KS and Albuquerque.

This application was for Hutchinson to just west of Garden City but had bipartisan support from officials in Colorado, Kansas and New Mexico.

Moreover, it included matching commitments of \$3 million from Kansas and \$4 million from Amtrak. Business

Indiana U's Smerk Wins NARP Academic Award

NARP presented our third annual academic award to Dr. George M. Smerk, professor emeritus of Transportation at Indiana University Bloomington.

Presentation of our award by NARP Council Member Steve Coxhead of Hammond, IN, added to the festivities at Dr. Smerk's 80th birthday party organized by his students.

This award text begins by acknowledging "a lifetime devoted to the study and teaching of railroad history, and of work to insure the future of passenger trains." The text continues:

"For 37 years on the Indiana University faculty, valuable contributions to railroad and transit literature, and work to establish and maintain state funding for the South Shore Line—including 30 years representing Indiana's governor on the Board of the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District—America's travelers are grateful."

Dr. Smerk, a Philadelphia native, holds B.S. and MBA degrees from Bradley University and a D.B.A. from Indiana U. He taught three years at the University of Maryland before joining Indiana in 1966. He retired in 2003.

He wrote six books on transit policy and management, and was editor of a respected series of Indiana University Press railroad history books. He is a member of the American Society of Transportation and Logistics. He edited

and political leaders from both parties are working hard to save the *Chief*. A Sept. 14 ColoRail/NARP *Chief* meeting in Pueblo, CO—at which NARP's Ross Capon spoke—had strong, bipartisan participation from the three states.

Wichita, KS, sought \$12.7 million for engineering and environmental work to extend the *Heartland Flyer* north to connect it with the *Chief*.

New Orleans sought \$13.5 million to improve the Amtrak coach yard there.

Somerset County (PA) sought to fund new station and platform at Rockwood, for a new *Capitol Ltd.* stop. ■



Wendy Smerk

Dr. George Smerk holds third NARP Academic Award at his 80th birthday celebration in Bloomington July 6. His son Paul is at right.

the mass transit newsletter *Newsline* and served on the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies. He currently writes the "Transit Currents" column in the magazine *Railfan and Railroad*. ■

THE DINKY BY ANOTHER NAME

Responding to our August story on our fight to preserve the NJ Transit Princeton Branch, NARP member James Kilcoyne says F. Scott Fitzgerald and his college pals used to call the "Dinky" train the "PJ&B," for "Princeton Junction and Back."

Support NARP: Donate Your Unneeded Car

Michael and Nancy Gotwalt may have discovered perhaps the ultimate symbolic way to support our cause. They have donated not one, but two cars to strengthen NARP's work for passenger train service nationwide. They realized that NARP must redouble our efforts to preserve and improve train travel for generations to come.

They did it through CARS, a company that transports, repairs, and sells unneeded vehicles sitting in people's driveways or garages. The proceeds go to supporting NARP and provide you with a tax deduction, and contribute towards creating jobs and improving the environment by bringing more and better passenger trains to America.

These benefits made it clear to Nancy and Michael Gotwalt that donating a car to NARP was the way to go. Be the next member to follow in the Gotwalts' footsteps and consider donating a vehicle. **Call 1-855-NARP-CAR or visit www.bit.ly/narpcars.**

Nancy and Michael Gotwalt and their son Nick are longtime train riders

Courtesy of the Gotwalt Family



Nick, Nancy and Michael Gotwalt at a scenic overlook in Vancouver, BC, Canada, where they attended the 2010 Winter Olympics. They reached Vancouver by train from their home near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

who can't imagine traveling any other way. Says Michael, "We like train travel because it affords a chance to see the world at ground level. Train travel is part of the trip, not an expedient method of getting from one place to another, but rather a relaxing part of your travels."

From *Auto Train* to the *California Zephyr* to the now defunct *Desert Wind*, the Gotwalts have seen the country through train windows. The family has accumulated over 100,000 rail miles, including in Canada, Europe and Russia, where Nick went recently.

"Our thanks to NARP for leading the effort in expanding passenger rail service in America," they write. "We hope our donation helps in some small way." NARP thanks them and all our members for your dedication and generosity. Members are the backbone of this Association. Our members' support enables us to be a strong voice for train passengers. ■

NARP-STB Meeting from page 1

primarily are Amtrak's responsibility. But the standards also steadily increase the acceptable on-time performance well above 80% -- hence the host railroads' hostility to them.

We learned that the STB has only one passenger case before it – Amtrak vs. CN (Feb. 2012 *News*, p. 5). This case has been "in abeyance" at the request of both parties since March 26.

CN and Amtrak issued a joint status report on this case August 9, stating that "the parties have continued their discussions, and although those discussions have not yet resulted in an agreement, they have remained productive and warrant continuation of the current abeyance." They requested "a continuance of the abeyance...until July 31, 2014" to "facilitate continued discussions" and provide time for final resolution of the constitutionality of PRIIA Section 207(a).

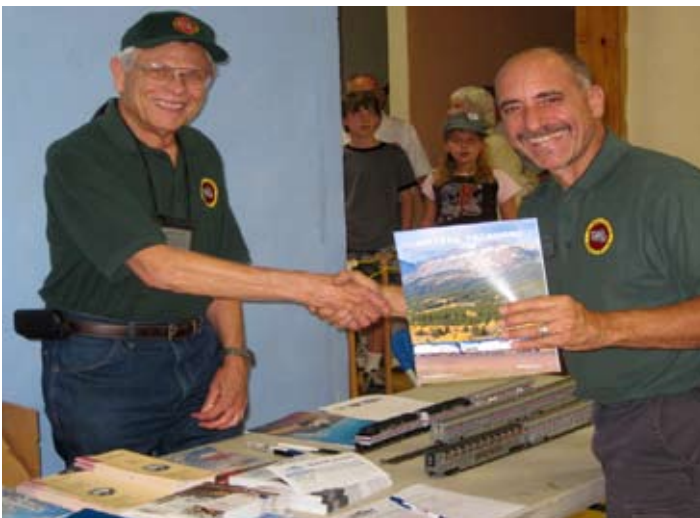
It is our understanding that Amtrak trains' on-time performance record on CN has improved over the past year.

DOJ Petition for Rehearing

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) petitioned the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to rehear *Association of American Railroads vs. U.S. DOT* before the full court. In the July 2 decision signed by three judges, the court ruled Section 207 unconstitutional because it granted regulatory power to a private company, Amtrak (Aug. *News*, p. 5).

DOJ's August 16 petition notes that "the Supreme Court has...sustained the validity of statutes that assign important roles to private parties as long as there is sufficient governmental oversight and involvement. ... The metrics and standards (that Amtrak and US DOT co-authored) are designed not to regulate freight railroads, but rather to measure Amtrak's own performance. A freight railroad faces liability only if the STB ... determines that Amtrak's performance deficiencies are attributable to the freight railroad's failure to [give Amtrak priority] as required under 49 U.S.C. 24308(c), the longstanding statutory preference requirement." ■

Turning Model Railroaders Into Advocates



Courtesy of Bob Ellis

NARP member Bob Ellis (left) spoke about Amtrak travel and train advocacy to 35 attendees at the Central Arizona Model Railroad Club's 2013 Swap Meet in Prescott on Aug. 17. He handed out NARP materials. NARP is looking for other members to do similar outreach in their communities. If you are interested, please call 202-408-8362 or email narp@narprail.org.

Logan McLeod, Resource Development Director

Logan McLeod has joined NARP's Washington staff as our first Director of Resource Development. He began Aug. 7 after completing a productive summer internship with NARP. A Winter Park, FL, native, he holds bachelors' degrees in Public Communications and Political Science from Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

Before FAU, he attended Randolph-Macon College on a football/academic scholarship to play Strong Safety. After suffering serious injuries, he attended Florida State University (FSU), where he was active in fundraising and community awareness programs through his fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha.



Colin Leach

Logan McLeod

Also while at FSU, Logan became an International Fitness Professionals Association-certified strength trainer and instructed kickboxing. He established his own, successful

business in West Palm Beach. Three years later, he sold the business and went to FAU to finish his BAs.

While there, he was a sales associate for Penetran Products. He managed and maintained independent pharmacies, clinics, doctor's offices, and health food stores while maintaining a full class schedule. He facilitated discussions at work on how to increase product sales and develop new selling strategies.

The Fund for American Studies, which gave NARP excellent interns the past three summers, accepted Logan and placed him in our intern program.

In his new position, he is building a successful fundraising program that will benefit the Association and raise awareness of the need for more passenger train service around the country.

He sees passenger trains as "the future means of transportation in the U.S. I want to be involved in something that will serve the needs of every American. Trains contribute to jobs and commerce as well as mobility. My generation must understand the results of bad transportation investment decisions in the past. We need to consider what's needed to produce a prosperous future for everyone in this country. I support passenger rail because I believe in its benefits and in the infinite possibilities it possesses." ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 2, Portland, ME: TrainRiders/Northeast 25th Anniversary Annual Meeting. 6:00 PM, Holiday Inn By-the-Bay. \$60/person. Register at www.trainridersne.org.

Oct. 5, San Francisco: Steel Wheels in California 2013 NARP-RailPAC Membership Meeting. 10:30-3:00, Port of SF Community Room at Pier 40, Embarcadero. Members \$35; others \$45. Register at www.railpac.org. NARP Chairman Bob Stewart will speak.

Oct. 5, Erie, PA: All Aboard Erie, 1 PM at Jefferson Educational Society. NARP's Sean Jeans-Gail will speak.

Oct. 19-20, Jacksonville, FL: NARP Council's Fall Meeting, Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront. (Aug. News; www.narprail.org and www.narprail.org/register).

Oct. 22-24, Washington, DC: 3rd Annual Transit Communications Conference. Georgetown Univ. Hotel & Conf. Ctr. Register at www.transitcomms.com. See August News.

Oct. 23, White River Jct., VT: Vermont Rail Action Network Annual Meeting. 5:30-9:00 PM, Hotel Coolidge. \$40/person. Register at www.railvermont.org.

Oct. 26, Southwestern NJ: New Jersey Assoc. of Railroad Passengers Fall Meeting. Time & place (in town along NJT's RiverLINE) TBA. See www.nj-arp.org.

FRA Hosts Six-State Passenger Train Workshop in Texas

Transportation officials from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana gathered Aug. 21 in Arlington, TX for a first-of-its-kind workshop on using "mega-region" travel demand to determine where expanded intercity passenger train service can be viable.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) organized the workshop and presented its "CONNECT" software to the state officials. The software is a new way to evaluate demand for passenger train service on various routes.

The expansion project most discussed was the extension of Amtrak's state-supported Fort Worth-Oklahoma City *Heartland Flyer* route north to New-

ton, KS (connecting with the *Southwest Chief*) and possibly Kansas City (see "Rejected Projects," pg. 3).

Texas and Oklahoma jointly are doing an Oklahoma City-South Texas service-level EIS.

An independent group in Tulsa is simultaneously looking into starting a private train service connecting Oklahoma City to Kansas City via Tulsa.

"It's always a good idea to collaborate, to hear what we all have going on so we're not

stepping on each other," Kansas Dept. of Transportation Government Relations Director Lindsey Douglas told the *Wichita Eagle* after the workshop. ■



Kurt Haubrich (Electroburger on Flickr.com)

Southbound *Heartland Flyer* at Saginaw, TX on Apr. 15, 2012.

National Association of Railroad Passengers
505 Capitol Ct. NE, Ste. 300 / Washington, DC / 20002-7706

Vol. 47, No. 7

September 2013

OUR MISSION: A MODERN, CUSTOMER-FOCUSED NATIONAL PASSENGER TRAIN NETWORK THAT PROVIDES A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT.

NARP, Amtrak Interns Exchange Presentations, Network



Ross Capon

L to R: Amtrak's Frances Bourne, NARP Interns Logan McLeod, Lessie Henderson, Colin Leach, NARP V.P. Sean Jeans-Gail, Amtrak's Matt Kelly, Amtrak intern John Johnson, Amtrak's Scott Leonard, Amtrak intern Nathan Schmidt, NARP Outreach Dir. Malcolm Kenton, and NARP Resource Dev. Coordinator Abe Zumwalt hear intern presentations at Amtrak headquarters.

Amtrak's Government Affairs team generously invited NARP's three stellar summer 2013 interns to Amtrak headquarters at Washington Union Station on July 22 to deliver presentations on their projects, and hear reports from the Amtrak Government Affairs interns.

From NARP, Colin Leach covered many aspects of federal policy towards passenger trains and other travel modes. Lessie Henderson discussed her work

to enhance NARP's outreach to new demographics, and Logan McLeod (now staff!, see page 5) discussed the need to band together with others who share our goals.

Amtrak interns John Johnson and Nathan Schmidt overviewed the company's diverse business lines and discussed research and activities. One highlight was giving legislators' children a tour of Union Station. ■

New Layout, Fare Structure at Amtrak.com

For those booking travel online, Amtrak now displays all discount options up front; the NARP discount is under the "Other Discounts" tab. Fare options for each trip are divided into the following "Fare Families."

Saver: Deeply discounted, non-refundable coach fare available 14 days or more in advance on certain routes, or Unreserved

coach fare (also non-refundable).

Value: Coach or *Acela* Business Class in all markets; refundable minus a 10% fee.

Flexible: Fully refundable coach.

Premium: Shows total rail fare plus accommodation charge for sleeper, Business Class and *Acela* First Class.

The website explains the terms and con-

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY
Major East Coast changes Oct. 14-Nov. 14 due to CSX trackwork Petersburg, VA to Rocky Mount, NC. **Mon-Thurs:** *Carolinian* canceled north of Raleigh with connecting bus to/from Selma, Wilson & Rocky Mount. **Daily:** *Palmetto* runs 4 hours later south & 1:40 later north; *Silver Star* north 4:10 earlier from Miami, Tampa/Lakeland use bus, Kissimmee north 5:45+ earlier; south no change.

Checked baggage service now available at Galesburg, IL (*Chief* and *Zephyr* only, trainside) & Joliet, IL (*Texas Eagle* only, with station agent); Fort Madison & Mount Pleasant, IA; and Newton & Topeka, KS (with station agent Mon-Fri, trainside Sat & Sun).

Empire Builder delays up to two hours to continue through late November due to speed restrictions imposed by BNSF between Fargo & Minot during track work.

Expect Heartland Flyer delays up to an hour through Dec. 1 due to BNSF track work & "Tower 55" improvement project.

ditions of each Fare Family.

The NARP member discount cannot be applied to Saver fares and only applies to the "rail fare" portion of Premium fares.

No changes to telephone, at station, QuickTrak or mobile app booking. ■