

1974— Year of Progress

Amtrak measured 1974 as a year of solid progress highlighted by expanding services, a nationwide reservations system, new equipment ordered or delivered and better on-time performance.

During the year Amtrak broke the back of one of its toughest early problems—late trains and unreliable schedules.

In the final months of 1974, Amtrak trains were on-time more than 80 percent of the time with substantial numbers of them operating in the 90 percent on-time range.

This improvement is the result of placing in operation 150 new 3,000

horsepower diesel locomotives, along with new incentive-penalty contracts with a growing number of Amtrak's member railroads.

Old Cars Fixed

Amtrak trains were more pleasant to ride in as well. By the end of the year, 1,035 of the older passenger cars which Amtrak bought from the railroads had completed refurbishing.

Newly negotiated rail maintenance agreements, along with stricter supervision from Amtrak inspectors, had resulted in improved equipment maintenance and cleanliness standards.

In November, Amtrak's Board of

Directors authorized negotiations for the purchase and takeover by Amtrak of the big Penn Central railroad car overhaul and repair shop at Beech Grove, Indiana.

If an agreement can be reached, and is approved by the federal court overseeing Penn Central bankruptcy proceedings, Amtrak plans to use Beech Grove as a central overhaul point for cars from all over its nationwide system.

It would give Amtrak, for the first time, direct control over overhaul operations now done under contract by the railroads or outside shops.

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Superior Passenger Service Key to Boosting 1975 Ridership

During this time period of industry-wide reduction in passenger and vacation travel, Amtrak Vice President Harold L. Graham sees Amtrak's continued ability to increase ridership as dependent to a large degree upon "offering superior passenger service."

"What we need from all our personnel is a consciousness that our level of service and our passenger handling is of the utmost importance in this very critical period," Graham said. "By offering superior passenger service we can get repeat business from passengers which will help us during this period of recession."

Compared to other modes of trans-

portation, Amtrak's ridership is doing "reasonably well," Graham said. Ridership was up about 6% overall in November. However, along with increased passenger counts on corridor routes, November ridership includes lowered passenger counts on western longhaul routes.

This is reflective of a general decline in long distance travel. Consumers, trapped by the generally slumped economy, are extremely price conscious. Many are foregoing long distance travel and staying home.

The U.S. Travel Data Center reports that in November airlines experienced declines in ridership ranging from 5 to

10 percent below November 1973. United Airlines was down 9%; Eastern down 5.7% and American down 12%.

According to field reports, bus operators experienced a 1.1% decline for the 12 month period ending October 1974—in spite of a substantial ridership boost received during the first half of 1974 from the energy crisis. Automobile travel is estimated as down 4-5%, an extremely significant number because of the broad base of automobile users.

A contributing factor to projected tightening of Amtrak ridership, Graham said, is that from November 1974 through May 1975, ridership will be compared with the inflated energy crisis levels of 1973-74.

Not content to wait for a surge in the economy, Graham's Marketing Department is studying each route on an individual basis to determine where new types of promotional fares could make substantial changes in traffic.



An artist's sketch of Amtrak's new Metroliner-type coaches being built by the Budd Co.

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The Amtrak Fleet

As the year ended, however, relief was in sight. Four more high-speed Turboliners were scheduled to arrive from France to join two others already in service in the midwest. Seven more turbine trains based on the French design were on order and will be constructed by an American firm in Georgia.

The first of 292 new stainless steel non-powered Metroliner-type cars were under construction in Pennsylvania for planned delivery in the Spring of 1975.

As the year ended Amtrak awaited delivery of the first of 26 new 6,000-horsepower electric locomotives to haul its trains over the electrified tracks in the Northeast.

And at year end, Amtrak was evaluating bids from three U.S. manufacturers to build the first new all-Amtrak double-deck passenger car. An order for at least 200 of the cars is under consideration.

The order will include sleepers, coaches and combination coach-food service cars. When delivered, sometime in 1976, the new "bi-levels" will go into use on Amtrak's medium distance and long distance trains outside the northeast.

More Trains

There was a clear need for the new equipment. During 1974 Amtrak, at the

direction of Congress, added two new routes to its national system.

One, the Inter-American, operates three times a week in each direction for over 1200 miles between St. Louis, Mo., and Laredo, Texas.

The other train, the San Joaquin, operated daily between San Francisco/Oakland and Bakersfield, Calif., with bus connections to two of our most popular National Parks, Yosemite and Kings Canyon.

Even more trains were added as the result of agreements with several states whereby two-thirds of the operating losses were paid for by the states involved.

During 1974 Amtrak and states began operating new daily trains between Chicago and Dubuque, Iowa (The Black Hawk); Chicago and Port Huron, Mich. (The Blue Water); New York and Montreal via Albany (The Adirondack); New York and Albany (The Washington Irving); and between New York and Detroit across southern Ontario (extension of the Empire State Express).

Still More Trains

At the direction of the Secretary of Transportation, Amtrak planned to begin in March 1975 a new daily train between Norfolk, Va., and Cincinnati via Petersburg, Lynchburg and Roanoke.

Station Work Progressed

With the new trains came new or refurbished stations. These included facilities at Battle Creek, Jackson, East Lansing and Port Huron in Michigan; Dubuque, Iowa; Lima, Ohio; Rockford, Ill.; and Fort Edward, Saratoga and Plattsburg in New York state.

Contracts had been let or designs completed for new or rebuilt stations in Richmond and Roanoke in Virginia and at Bluefield, W. Va., and Catlettsburg, Ky.

ARTS Helps

Amtrak's nationwide, toll-free information and reservation system, which was designed and built in 1973, went into full operation in mid-summer of 1974.

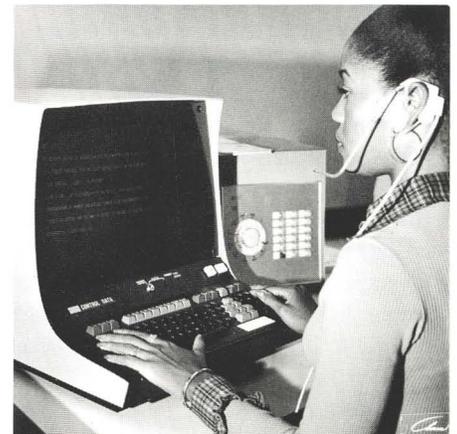
It is the most sophisticated reservations system ever operated by a U.S. railroad.

By the end of the year over 900 trained reservations clerks in five regional centers around the country were handling an average of 72,000 phone calls a day.

By year's end the new system had handled 18 million calls, the average time for each phone transaction had been reduced from 6½ minutes to 3½ minutes.

Amtrak's passengers were finding fewer mistakes in reservations and the corporation profited from better use of available space on its trains.

"Scopes" revolutionized rail reservations and ticketing.



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Complaints about reservations, which a year earlier had ranked third from the top in letters from passengers, were third from the bottom by the end of the year.

Better Tracks

Track improvement, a problem snarled by complicated legal questions, nevertheless began in 1974.

Amtrak's Board of Directors approved spending \$21.6 million to upgrade track between Boston and New York with more money to be allocated later to the Washington-New York section of the northeast corridor. Engineering studies began and the first actual construction involved repairs to a drawbridge at Old Saybrook, Conn.

People Programs

For a new and growing company, personnel and labor relations practices can be of vital importance.

During 1974 Amtrak added over 3,600 employees to its payroll as it moved the most significant service func-

tions from the railroads to its own control. This involved on-board service crews for the most part.

Amtrak also stepped up its efforts to assume direct responsibility for spot maintenance workers and car cleaners in several terminals around the country.

In the process Amtrak negotiated complicated contracts with seven employee unions.

Beyond 1975

During the year Amtrak submitted to the Executive Branch and to Congress an ambitious five-year financial plan which outlined long-range improvements.

The plan called for expenditures for additional new equipment and the investment of \$1.2 billion over six years to substantially improve track and signal systems on 12 separate short and medium distance "corridor" routes.

With the proposed equipment and roadbed improvement, Amtrak's document said the company could begin offering attractive alternative transportation in many parts of the country and begin to bring Amtrak's revenues into balance with its deficits.

Beech Grove, Ind.



Amtrak Appoints

Edwin H. Funk as Manager—Revenue Accounting. He reports to the Director of Accounting and is responsible for all activities related to the accounting for revenues, ticket sales, related billings and audits of agents' records. He joined Amtrak in August 1973 as a Section Supervisor in Revenue Accounting. Funk is a graduate of Staten Island Community College and has had several responsible positions as Assistant Treasurer, Assistant Controller and Controller of prominent companies in the Washington area. His experience includes data collection, communications and consulting duties.

Marvin J. Liebow as Manager of Disbursements. Responsible for Accounts Payable and Payroll departments in Revenue Accounting, reporting to the Director of Accounting. Liebow has been with Amtrak for two years, starting as a Systems Analyst. He was later made Supervisor of redemptions and food & beverage revenue functions. Liebow was formerly Deputy Facilities Engineer for the Military District of Washington where he was responsible for computer programming and budgeting for construction projects. He also has computer systems experience in the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Lee Price as Director of Accounting. Reporting to Controller Sydney S. Sterns, he is responsible for all activities relating to the accounting for revenues, general accounts, payrolls, property, inventories and accounts payable. Price joined Amtrak as a Senior Contract Auditor in Feb., 1973 and was promoted to Manager—Revenue Accounting in Feb. 1974. A graduate of Brigham Young University, Price is a certified public accountant and has experience in the management of his own practice and with Haskins & Sells.

What They're Saying

About Amtrak

Nancy M. Davis in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch:

"The dining car [on Amtrak's San Francisco Zephyr], with its turquoise upholstery, white napery and fresh carnations, smells deliciously of ham and bacon, making even the short wait unbearable. Yet outside big picture windows the brilliant Western landscape rolling by is really a feast for the eyes . . . The modern descendant of the iron horse looks like an appetizing way to go."

Nigel Buxton in the London Sunday Telegraph:

"... to be on a great railway train moving slowly through the Los Angeles suburbs toward the San Bernardino Hills, with the sun going down in a last, red blaze . . . to begin a journey in that way, and with the end of it two days and three nights away on the other side of one of the greatest countries on earth; *that* is one of the most romantic travel experiences of all."

James Nelson Goodsell in the Christian Science Monitor:

"Amtrak has come up with a combination tour that brings a vacation-bound family to Orlando and puts them into a motor home for a week or more of sightseeing at Disney World and other attractions . . . For the visitor, it is one of the best package deals possible—and suggests the way travel arrangements may be going in the future."

Kim Foltz in Gentlemen's Quarterly:

"Amtrak . . . is trying to polish train service to a point where it's again a pleasure to travel by rail. For the most part, Amtrak is succeeding . . . The prices are attractive, too."

Re-using Rail Passenger

Stations Subject of Seattle Meeting

Re-use of railroad terminals as intermodal transportation centers was the subject of a meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council on Transportation Quality in Seattle, December 9 and 10. The council, which is the only citizens group reporting directly to the Secretary of Transportation, recommended ways of implementing the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1974's direction on re-use of stations.

The Act authorizes \$15 million for converting three railroad stations into intermodal terminals; \$5 million for preserving suitable historic stations and \$5 million for planning purposes. Responsibility for implementation rests with the Secretary of Transportation. He is expected to issue guidelines on use of funds by early next year, after considering recommendations from interested parties like the Citizens Advisory Council on Transportation.

The meeting had participation from representatives of such cities as Seattle, Boston, Dallas and San Diego. In addition, representatives from DOT, Amtrak, historic preservation groups and several passenger carriers were present.

Director of State and Local Affairs David Watts, who represented Amtrak, noted that "mass transportation implies an economy of scale in land use as well as units of energy consumed to produce a passenger-mile. Intermodal terminals will conserve land devoted to transportation facilities as well as reduce the units of energy consumed to operate these facilities. When the terminal itself is 're-cycled' from a historic old rail station, it also conserves capital which would be required to construct a replacement facility. And, aesthetically speaking, old stations are sometimes community landmarks."



Dave Watts

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Amtrak's Winter Ad Campaigns

"Amtrak's roving reporter," Paul Anthony, was back on the radio December 16 through December 22, telling prospective train travelers how best to beat the Christmas holiday rush. Radio ads reminiscent of last winter's energy crisis campaign ran in areas of anticipated high frequency train travel: Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Detroit, Chicago, New York, Washington, D.C., Carbondale and Springfield, Ill.

Anthony warned that "this holiday season Amtrak may be busier than ever because so many people want to save gas and money too by taking the train instead of driving." He advised travelers to "help themselves out" by scheduling trips a day before or after the big holiday rush and by making reservations and picking up tickets well in advance of departure. Since on many trains passengers don't need reservations, Anthony suggested "just buying a ticket and coming aboard." Another Anthony holiday tip: best travel times are after 10:00 am and before 4:00 pm.

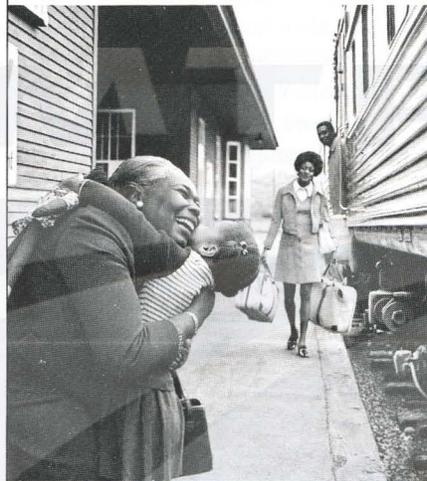
During late November and early December, Amtrak's Advertising Department also ran newspaper coupon ads promoting regional ski tours. The theme: "Amtrak makes an inexpensive vacation unforgettable." After Vermont's first snow fall in mid-December, Advertising Specialist Joyce Greene also scheduled eye-catching ads in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. and Baltimore newspapers announcing, literally, "It's snowing in Amtrak's ski country."

In mid-November new Amtrak ads introduced the "anti-inflation vacation: Amtrak to Florida" in East Coast and Chicago newspapers. Also premiering in late November was what King Pedlar, Amtrak's Advertising Media Specialist, considers to be Amtrak's best college ad to-date. Headlined "Catch up on your sociology on the way home," the ad appeared in 87 college newspapers selected by Amtrak's regional sales managers. It tells students that "there is something about a train ride that brings people closer and makes everybody a little more sociable." And, "although not as

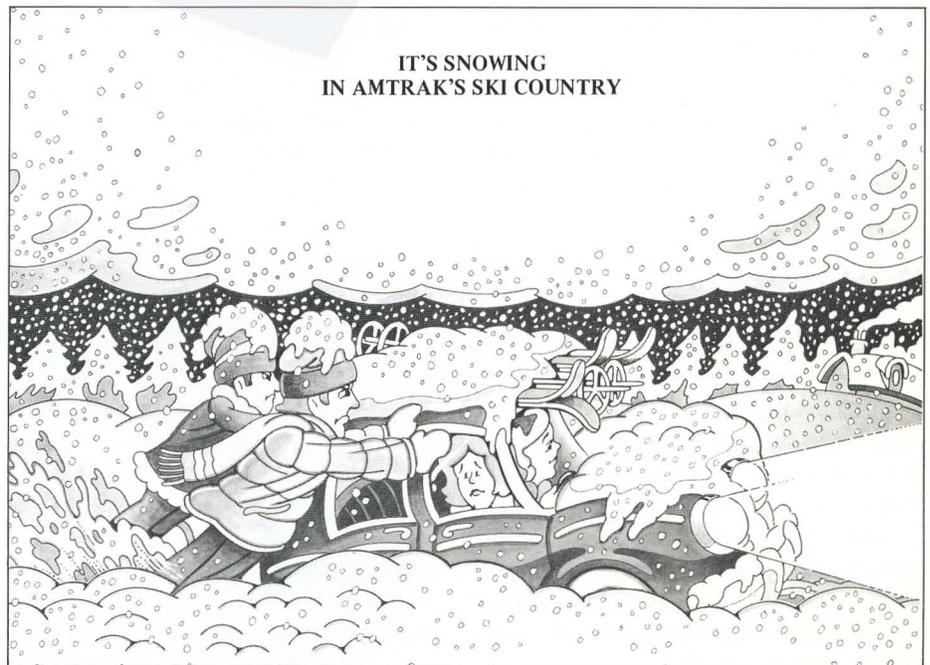
cheap as hitchhiking, trains are a lot less expensive than flying."

A family reunion ad will appear in the January issue of Ebony kicking off Amtrak's 1975 advertising campaign. Its message is simple but timely: "holiday time or any time, Amtrak thinks family reunions are too important to let inflation get in the way. But an Amtrak trip is more than economical. More than restful. Once you come aboard, you'll find it's today's fun way to travel."

AMTRAK BRINGS BACK THE JOYOUS FAMILY REUNION. LAUGHTER. LOVE. AND NO INFLATION



IT'S SNOWING IN AMTRAK'S SKI COUNTRY



Economical Group Ski Packages

Can skiing be cheaper by the dozen? Yes, if you travel by Amtrak. So said Glenn W. Evers, Amtrak's Director of Sales, in announcing a big step-up in group ski packages this winter for those who take Amtrak trains to Vermont's ski slopes.

Evers said Amtrak's first economy package offered to groups last year (to Bolton Valley) was so successful it will be augmented this year to the Sugarbush, Killington, Pico, Stowe and Smuggler's Notch areas.

The ski groups take Amtrak's overnight train, the Montrealer, to Waterbury or Essex Junction, Vt., for all areas except Killington and Pico, which are served both by The Montrealer to White River Junction, Vt., and by Amtrak's new daylight train, The Adirondack, to Whitehall, N.Y.

The bigger the group, in many cases,

the more costs fall. One package to Sugarbush, for example, is \$33 a day for a group of 10 to 20; \$31 a day, for a group of 21 to 30; \$30 a day if the club or other group has more than 31 buying the Amtrak package. The double-occupancy rate includes transfer from the Waterbury Amtrak station to the lodge and shuttle service between it and the ski area, daily ski lift tickets, a wine and cheese party, use of indoor pool and sauna and reduced rates for tennis and squash.

Rail fares are extra but Mr. Evers said a group rate discount is also available on Amtrak in many cases.

Several of Amtrak's group economy packages also include ski lessons and most meals. One five-day, four-night Amtrak "Ski Week" available for groups of 10 or more, for example, is \$169.50 double-occupancy, with transfers to and

from the station and the slopes, plus breakfast and dinners, tax and gratuities, ski lift tickets and five two-hour ski lessons. Triple or quad occupancy lowers the price \$5 a day.

Each of the operators with whom Amtrak has worked to package the group economy packages offers a specialty of its own. A resort at Chittenden, Vt., welcomes arriving guests with a glass of cider and pastry. At one Bolton Valley resort you have unlimited use of four double chairlifts and 22 trails and slopes. Night skiing is a bonus. Another Bolton Valley lodging stresses money savings by bringing your own liquor and buying only the inn's set-ups. A Stowe motor inn, which offers only breakfast, points out it is "within walking distance of four restaurants and two top night clubs." A Smuggler's Notch package includes accommodations at a luxury condominium, with brick fireplace in each apartment.

Keeping Track of Amtrak

Milwaukee Parking

The Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation recently dedicated a 100-car parking lot one-half block north of the Milwaukee Amtrak terminal as one effort to improve rail passenger service in the state. The cost of providing free parking to Amtrak passengers is borne by the state. Officials hope the gift of the lot will demonstrate their commitment to helping Amtrak, although present state law and lack of funds severely limits their ability to do so. A manager is responsible for making sure only

Amtrak passengers use the facility. Passengers are allowed to park in the lot for as long as they wish as compared to the previous 30-minute limit.

Passenger Praise

An organization in Ohio promoting better railroad passenger service recently lauded Amtrak for upgrading the operation of the James Whitcomb Riley. David S. Marshall of Dayton, president of the Ohio Association of Railroad

Passengers, said, "Amtrak has made fantastic improvements recently in its James Whitcomb Riley passenger train service. The train is now very dependable and it runs on time."

The Riley was plagued during the spring and summer with a poor on-time record. The major reason for improvement is the routing of the Riley over the Chessie System tracks between Cincinnati and Chicago. Amtrak ordered operation over the Chessie to avoid use of Penn Central tracks in Indiana.

Trends In Railroading

Electrification Evaluated

The electric railway, which has been popular in Europe and Japan for decades, may someday come into its own in the United States. This could happen despite the enormous amount of capital it would take to electrify a substantial portion of the extensive U.S. rail network, according to Arthur D. Little, Inc., a Cambridge, Mass., research firm. New electric locomotives drawing power

from overhead lines can now operate on ordinary, commercially available power because of the development of solid state electrical controls. This means the railroads would not have to build their own generating plants as they have previously done. Since the electric locomotive does not have to carry fuel for a big diesel engine, it can be built for 80 percent of the cost of an equivalent

diesel and its maintenance cost may be only 25 percent of the diesel. Not having to refuel, electrics would have little or no mechanical turnaround time at the end of their runs. Electric locomotives also have a useful life almost twice as long as the diesels. Finally, the study said, all-electric engines are faster and better at climbing steep grades than the best diesels.

New Amtrak Routes:

It's All in the Planning

When Amtrak begins operating a train over a new route, it is heralded at each stop by local officials and high-school bands. Newspaper reporters vie with each other to write the best railroad story. And the train becomes a topic of conversation among the townsfolk.

Long before the hoopla of inaugural day, however, months of methodical planning have been spent by Amtrak's staff members who specialize in developing new trains.

It's ironic, but the day the service starts is the day the planners disappear and begin working on a new line.

The Beginning

It all starts when an announcement is made that Amtrak will begin service over a new route.

At least once a year the Secretary of the Dept. of Transportation designates a new route for Amtrak service. The announcement may also come from Congress upon passage of legislation requiring a certain route to be placed in the Amtrak network. (New routes may also be initiated at the request of one or more states under the provisions of Section 403(b) of the Amtrak legislation. The special planning requirements of new "403(b) services" will be the subject of a future Amtrak News article.)

Difficult Questions

In any event, the initial proclamation stirs up prospective train travelers, Amtrak employees and news reporters, all of whom thirst for details about the new train.

The most frequently asked questions include: When will the train start? What stops will it make? What will the schedule be? What type of accommodations will be provided? What will be the fares? And, why was that route selected; why not one through our town?

Because the same questions are being asked by Amtrak's planners and the answers are interrelated, a long period of time usually passes before detailed decisions are available and then only after complex study into all aspects of the service.

For that reason alone, firm news should not be expected soon on the new Boston-Cleveland-Chicago or Washington, D.C.-Denver routes, although the planning process is already well underway.

The 'Wilderness' People

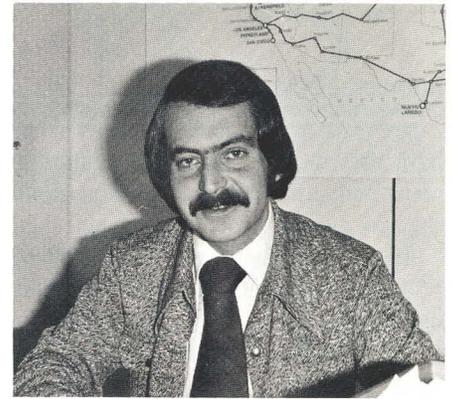
After the initial announcement, the staff members who first take action are John Acken, Manager of Transportation Studies, and Herb Longhelt, Chief Engineer, both in the Operations Department, along with Al Edelston, Manager—Station Facilities, in the Service Department.

"When a new service is being considered, we're the first guys out in the wilderness. We beat the bushes, bring home operating problems, conditions of stations, where new tracks are needed or old tracks need upgrading, where connections need to be constructed or repaired," said Acken.

The on-site inspection of stations, tracks and servicing facilities along the proposed route must be done carefully. These details affect the schedule, the marketability of the train, and in certain instances even the type of equipment used.

Schedule & Consist Committee

This information is then turned over to the Schedule and Consist Committee made up of representatives of four departments. The committee, established in December 1973, includes Chris Wahmann, Operations; Doug Willmott, Marketing; Gisel Bieling, Services and Martin Kuhn, Government



Al Edelston, Manager of Station Facilities



John Acken, Manager of Transportation Studies (left) and Herb Longhelt, Chief Engineer

Affairs. (For further details on this committee, see Amtrak News, July 15, 1974, p. 5.)

After extensive evaluation, and often further studies carried out, the committee recommends a set of firm proposals to Amtrak's top management.

Facility Work

When decisions are reached regarding station stops, Acken and Longhelt work closely with railroad personnel to see that necessary facility work is undertaken. On many occasions, John Brandimarte, Engineer—Structures, has been responsible for contracting for facility repairs. Also, Mike Kelly, Director—Contract Administration, negotiates the necessary contracts with the railroads.

Meanwhile, Wahmann and Morrie Andreasen, Manager—Car Control, must determine which cars in Amtrak's extremely tight fleet will be available to meet the requirements of the new service.

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Information Develops

At this point, many months may have passed since the initial announcement and some firm information about the new service is usually available.

If a service has been designated by DOT or mandated by Congress, President Roger Lewis may testify before a Congressional committee about the work underway.

New Norfolk Train

The result of these efforts can be seen in the new Norfolk-Cincinnati ser-

vice, which will begin in March 1975.

Several decisions have been made. For example, with the assistance of Wahmann and Andreasen and concurrence of the Schedule & Consist Committee, a determination was made to run a consist of two coaches, one combined diner-lounge car, one sleeper and one dorm-baggage car on the new route.

The train will provide for the first time in many years through coach and sleeping car service to Chicago. The Marketing Dept. expects this to benefit the train's ridership. Through service will be accomplished as a result of arrangements made by the Operating

Dept. to merge the train near Ashland, Ky. with the existing James Whitcomb Riley.

The connection between the Norfolk & Western Ry. (N&W) and Chessie System near Ashland is being upgraded under the direction of Herb Longhelt in Engineering.

Vanishing Planners

One common factor is shared by the Norfolk-Cincinnati run and other new routes: As crowds cheer the inaugural train rolling down the tracks, don't look for Acken, Longhelt or Edelston to be aboard. Chances are they'll be elsewhere, starting all over again.

Amtrak Employee Reduced Rate Foreign Travel

Amtrak employees may now ride at reduced rates on railroads in several foreign countries.

"We've established agreements with railroads in Great Britain, Denmark, Germany, Portugal, Sweden and Peru where some Amtrak employees travel on vacations," said Kenneth A. Housman, Vice President—Personnel and Administration.

The new plan could reduce overseas travel costs somewhat for Amtrak employees.

The reduced-rate policy varies in each of the countries and employees should contact the pass bureau for specific information.

"In Great Britain, Denmark and Portugal, transportation is free to an Amtrak employee but spouses and depen-

dents must pay full fare," said Mike Jackson, Administrator—Pass Bureau.

In Germany and Peru, both Amtrak employees and their dependents pay reduced rates (usually 50 percent).

Jackson had this caution for Amtrak employees traveling to Europe:

"If an employee is making only one or two trips within Europe, then he should check with us on details regarding reduced rates. If, however, he plans extensive European travel, then the Eurailpass may actually be a better bargain."

An employee planning a trip to one of the above countries, desiring to use the employee plan, should write the pass bureau giving specific date and routes of travel. This is necessary because each foreign railroad requires ad-

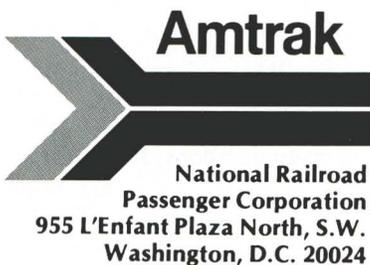
vance itinerary information.

This should be done at least 60 days in advance of the employee's departure date, allowing enough time to insure receipt of authorization from the foreign railroad.

The employee must be in active service and entitled to Amtrak pass privileges to qualify for the foreign reduced-rate plan.

"It may sound awkward and time-consuming to make use of these privileges," said Housman, "but, to the extent some of our employees can take advantage of them, it's a benefit."

These particular agreements between Amtrak and foreign railroads apply to Amtrak employees only, not to employees of individual railroads over which Amtrak operates.



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