

Amtrak NEWS

A NEWSLETTER FOR AMTRAK EMPLOYEES

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October 1, 1974

Travel Restrictions Eased For Amtrak Pass Riders

With the heavy summer travel season over, Amtrak has liberalized its travel policy for pass-holders riding trains at free or reduced rates.

It is now possible for a pass-holder to use his travel privileges on practically all space (including sleeping car space on weekends) and all trains in the system.

The only trains still restricted are the Metroliners, New York-Boston Turbo trains, and the Silver Meteor between December 13, 1974 and April 30, 1975.

The advance time limit on reservations, formerly not more than four hours prior to the passenger's scheduled departure time, has been lengthened to 24 hours. This makes it easier for pass-holders to be certain

of finding available space on trains.

"Employees should to the maximum extent possible use the accommodations available to them during the fall and spring seasons," said Harold L. Graham, Vice President—Marketing. "Summer travel restrictions will have to continue each year until Amtrak receives substantial amounts of new equipment."

"Considering the number of trains that we have and the capacity that is available during the off-season, space availability is much greater than in the summer. Therefore, pass-holders should 'think vacation' during the off seasons," added Graham.

Pass-holders desiring to travel need keep only the following four restrictions in mind:

Metroliners and Boston-New York Turbo trains: Present policy continues. These trains are prohibited to all employee free and reduced-rate travel unless the pass document contains an endorsement reading "Restricted" or "Good for Metroliners and Turbo trains."

Silver Meteor: Between December 13, 1974 and April 30, 1975, this train is prohibited to all free and reduced-rate travel. No pass document, regardless of endorsements, will be honored for transportation on this train.

Coach Space on Other Reserved Trains: No person riding on a free or reduced-rate pass may make a reservation more than 24 hours prior to his scheduled departure time. The purpose of the 24-hour limit is to insure that the traveling public is not preempted by pass-holders.

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Service Bureau Ensures ICC Compliance

Amtrak has established an Adequacy of Service Bureau, under the direction of Claims Manager John Hannigan and Special Assistant Dennis E. Vorbau, to ensure that Amtrak service meets regulations issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission, to reply to customer complaints and to gauge passenger response to service.

"To understand how the bureau works, it's first necessary to understand the ICC regulations covering passenger service," said Hannigan.

"The ICC now requires a toll-free nationwide 24-hour-a-day reservation. The rules require free meals and hotel accommodations for passengers who miss connections as a result of late trains. They also govern standards for stations, baggage handling, equipment, food and sleeping car service and train performance," Hannigan continued.

Certain sections of the regulations are quite specific with respect to compliance. Amtrak must provide the type of accommodations on the

train and on the departure date confirmed to the customer and for which the customer paid. Amtrak must hold a reservation for a sufficient period of time to enable a customer to pay for and thereby confirm the reservation.

Perhaps the feature of the rules which has become most apparent to station and on-board personnel is the official ICC complaint form which must be carried on every train and made readily available to all passengers. Over 200,000 of these forms have been distributed aboard trains and in stations.

Because of these regulations, the Adequacy of Service Bureau has been established to evaluate Amtrak service in light of the regulations and

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TRAVEL— (Continued from page 1)

Sleeping Cars: All sleeping car space must be secured through a reservation made in 24 hours or less of the passenger's scheduled departure

BUREAU— (Continued from page 1)

to respond to passenger complaints. The bureau is part of the Legal Department.

"I look upon our bureau as a friend of the railroad passenger. It's a sounding board where their complaint or request for specific action will receive a fair and just hearing," said Dennis Vorbau.

"We are in the business of providing a service and practically all of the specifics in the ICC rules are things that Amtrak has already implemented, or had planned for the future. The ICC order only reminds us of what our obligations are to the public. The key difference is that, because of the ICC order, Amtrak is subject to sanctions for violations of service standards," stated Vorbau.

The ICC becomes aware of violations in two ways. First, the Commission has approximately 250 field inspectors around the country. If an inspector finds substandard service aboard a train or in a station, a formal report is filed with the ICC in Washington.

Of more immediate concern to Amtrak's new bureau are complaint forms filled out by passengers who express dissatisfaction with the service received. The forms are sent to Amtrak with a copy to the ICC. The Commission's order requires that Amtrak respond to each passenger within 15 days advising of the action that will be taken or explaining why the complaint is not in violation of ICC standards.

Claims Adjustor Valerie Salisbury said that each complaint is given careful study before a decision is made regarding disposition.

"Some complaints are valid, and an adjustment results. In other cases we find that no rule has been violated, but a letter of complete explanation

time. No sleeping car space may be secured aboard any train by a pass-holder.

Currently, Amtrak has 29,500 unreserved seats daily on which there are no restrictions. Of the 17,000 in

is sent to the passenger," said Salisbury.

Instead of issuing standard responses, the bureau tracks down each potential violation and will send specific information to the traveler. For example, if air conditioning failed, and the passenger reports the line or car number, Amtrak's reply will contain the specific reason for the failure and what action has been, or will be, taken to rectify the failure.

"In other words, each complaint is investigated fully," Vorbau said. "When we conduct an investigation, it is imperative that Amtrak employees give complete and factual answers. Objectivity is important because we take a position with passengers and the ICC based on information supplied by field, regional and headquarters personnel."

Amtrak and railroad operating personnel are an essential part of this operation. The old adage, said Vorbau, that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" applies. With this attitude, many potential complainants can be satisfied with on-the-spot relief.

"This means we should be responsive to passenger complaints and do everything reasonable to alleviate the problem immediately. In most cases, the 'we try' attitude will satisfy a passenger and he will not register a formal complaint," Vorbau said.

"Our people can best help us," he continued. "If a car has lost its air conditioning, the passengers should be moved immediately to another when conditions permit and, if necessary, receive a step-up in accommodations. As a matter of policy, Amtrak has always done this, but now the ICC requires it."

Amtrak employees should also make an extra effort to help aged and infirm passengers. On-board assist-

reserved status, only a limited number have any restrictions.

This liberalized policy follows the desire by Amtrak management to place as few restraints as possible on travel by pass-holders.

ance to all passengers should be provided for baggage, especially when being reaccommodated. Station and on-board employees should keep travelers advised of train delays and unusual situations. Passengers who are expected to miss connections should be advised by on-board personnel to report to an Amtrak Station Services office for help.

When complaints do come into the bureau, they are handled in an equitable manner so inconvenienced passengers will be encouraged to avail themselves of Amtrak service again.

"We exercise great care in replying to our passengers," said Vorbau. "We also try to educate them by explaining to them our peculiar problems. Useful information regarding planned improvements to stations and equipment is included in the letters. Our thrust is to develop understanding."

The program also provides Amtrak with a valuable source of information about complaints which can be used as a management tool. A computer system is being developed which will summarize and identify the most significant problems reported by passengers. It will be capable of isolating problems to specific regions, routes, cars, trains, stations and personnel.

Since the bureau's inception on May 28, over 4,000 complaint letters have been handled.

The organization of the new bureau, with Vorbau at its head, includes Claims Adjustor Valerie Salisbury; Correspondents Frank Bell, Heather Hart, Calvin Crawford and Reeves Simms; Secretary Taryn Smith; Refund Administrator Fred Weiderhold; Consumer Correspondent Linda Bruno; Clerk Typists Mary Ann Meyer and Heidi Erdley; and Data Clerks John T. Moshier and Jung H. Lee.

Amtrak 5-Year Plan: Insight & Reaction

Public and press reaction continues to come in on Amtrak's Five-Year Finance Plan which was sent to Congress early this month.

Senator Lowell P. Weicker, who was a member of the Surface Transportation Subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee at the time Amtrak was chartered ordered its publication in the *Congressional Record* along with a strongly worded, highly favorable letter. In Sen. Weicker's words, "In the past, I have often been critical of Amtrak and Amtrak management for its failure to push forcefully enough for improvements to our national rail passenger network. Therefore, I am particularly pleased that the corporation has just released a most impressive 5-year plan which should really get things rolling."

He continues with, "Perhaps most important, the new plan calls for the expenditure of \$200 million per year

over the next six years for major track improvements on 12 separate corridor routes. It is in the corridors that Amtrak really has an opportunity to contribute to a balanced national transportation system."

The corridor upgrading—one of the features of this plan—is an area of primary interest to us all. As such, it must be kept in its proper perspective. The marketing and operations concepts which are set forth in this plan delineate five categories of Amtrak passenger routes: Corridor, Short Haul, Long Haul, International and "New Trains" to include those initiated under the provisions of section 403b of the NRPC Act of 1970 (state supported routes). Thus, Corridor improvement is but one area of improvement; but it is that area of high frequency, high density travel where major revenue increases can be expected with the least delay.

Of the total capital acquisition

program which adds an investment total of \$2.1 billion to the currently approved Amtrak program of \$550.4 million, more than one half of that two billion would be programmed for Corridor right of way work. This gives an indication of the priority being given to corridor development in the 5-year, short term future of Amtrak.

It is interesting to note that the top Marketing Department priority has been assigned to the development of the Chicago-Detroit corridor. More money, however, is being proposed for the Boston-Washington corridor than to any other. As a result of right of way improvements, all corridor speeds will be increased. The Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati corridor is proposed to jump from today's 30 mph to a respectable 90 mph. Four corridors: Washington-Boston, Chicago-Detroit, Chicago-St. Louis, and Chicago-Milwaukee will be raised to Class 6, 110 mph track. Of all twelve corridors designated in the plan, only the Washington-Richmond corridor will be under 80 mph by 1979.

AMTRAK NEWS

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NEWS Staff

Joseph Vranich Ronnie Daly

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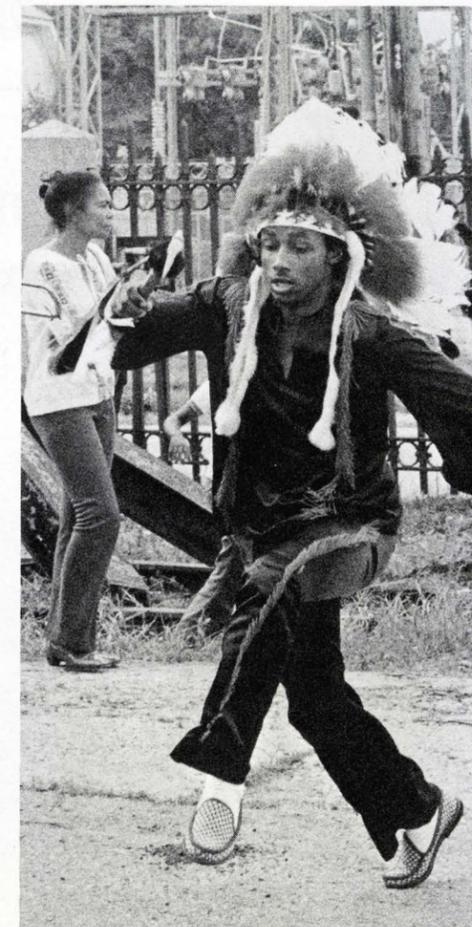
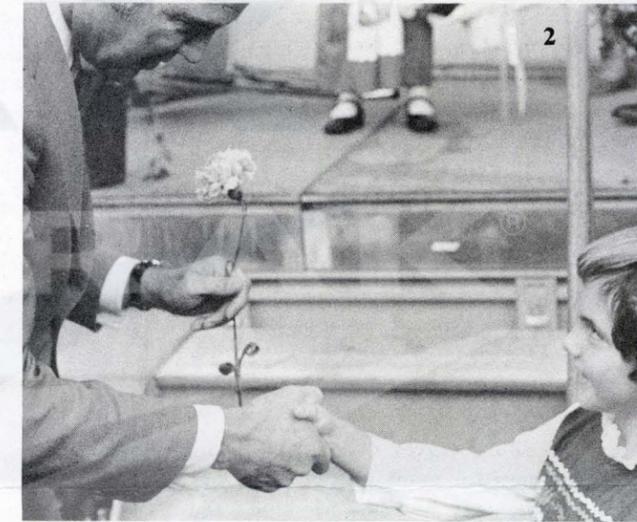


Julie Sargent, Amtrak PSR, presents PC Carman, Allen Suthern, with a silver spike commemorating the Floridian's first trip to Poinciana, FL., on September 15, as Service Director Bob Hawkinson looks on.

Michigan's "Blue Water"

Chicago-Port Huron Inaugural Sept. 13

R. Daly photos



1) Governor and Mrs. William G. Milliken. 2) A Flower for Governor Milliken, Niles, MI. 3) Richard Tower, Manager of Rail Operations for the state of Michigan. 4) John Brandimarte, Amtrak's Engineer, Structures (left); Carroll Hines, Amtrak's Manager of Station Support and June Langhoff, Junior Cost and Budget Administrator for Amtrak. 5) Governor Milliken and Dave Watts, Amtrak's Director of State and Local Affairs (right).



Yes, We Do Fly And Here's Why

Amtrak employees traveling on official business by air instead of by rail have come under criticism. The commentary appearing in several newspapers implies that Amtrak personnel should travel exclusively by train "to experience first hand" Amtrak service.

Amtrak employees do indeed travel by air, and there are good reasons for doing so. What the recent articles fail to mention, however, is that much travel is also by rail and Amtrak personnel are thoroughly familiar with problems encountered on the trains.

It is company policy that rail travel be used by employees whenever a substantial amount of work time is not lost as a result. In the Boston to Washington Corridor, for example, 90 percent of Amtrak employees' travel is by rail.

Most air travel occurs over long distances for many complex reasons.

First, as a new corporation, Amtrak has been highly centralized dur-

ing its first three years. While the company is building strong regional management organizations, officials must of necessity travel substantially to the regional centers at Los Angeles, Chicago and Miami. As in most businesses, time and allocation of personnel is critical. In leaving on a Monday by train from Washington, D.C. to the West Coast, for example, an employee would not arrive in Los Angeles until Thursday morning. If he then left Los Angeles that Thursday evening, he could not arrive back in Washington by train until Sunday evening. Clearly, this is not efficient management of an employee's time.

With an organization that expanded as rapidly as Amtrak, there has been a need for an extraordinary amount of travel. In little more than three years, Amtrak has expanded from zero employees to over 9,000, the majority taken over from the railroads. This activity has required frequent negotiations, job interviews and training programs. Many air trips to Los Angeles, Chicago and Jacksonville from Washington are not only because major reservations and operations centers are located there,

but because those cities are headquarters for the operating railroads and terminal companies.

Additionally, a major portion of air travel is by service and operations personnel assigned to time-sensitive projects. Station problems and freight train derailments blocking Amtrak trains are examples. Also there are at least 70 auditors who spend their entire working week at the offices and facilities of railroad companies examining the validity of billings to Amtrak. Family and personal considerations enter into these travel decisions. When auditors who live on the East Coast are working on the West Coast, they have authority to fly home every other weekend. Auditors in other parts of the country can go home every weekend. They use rail service when it is available and meets the required time schedules, but often it does not. Weekend travel to home is a normal practice in the auditing profession.

Another reason for air travel, especially since the energy crunch began in November of 1973, is that space just was not available on trains for Amtrak employees. Many must

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New Amtrak Tariff Available Oct. 10

Amtrak will soon distribute a new loose-leaf, color-coded tariff which will be easier to use and keep current than the present bound edition, according to Matt Paul, Manager—Fares and Tariffs.

The new tariff, "All America Train Fares, Edition Five," should be received at all locations by October 10. It will reflect current fares, including those in the west which became effective on September 8.

"The new loose-leaf arrangement will simplify the method of finding fares because it eliminates the neces-

sity of using supplements to the chapters containing fares. The supplements will be discontinued as every fares page will be current," said Paul.

Chapter One of Edition Four, which contains rules and regulations, is the only part of the tariff not changed at this time. This chapter will remain in effect and should be placed in the new tariff binder. It will be reissued in loose-leaf format at a later date.

A big virtue of the new tariff is that Amtrak will have greater flexibility in

changing or correcting fares on a page-by-page basis. When such a change occurs, Amtrak need merely issue a new page of the tariff to replace the old.

Color coding will be used for each chapter in the new edition. The rules in Chapter One (to be issued later) will be printed on yellow paper. The fares for each Amtrak route, Chapter Two, constituting the bulk of the tariff, will be printed on white paper and separated by numbered index tabs. These tabs will correspond to the tariff table numbers.

Chapter Three, inter-route fares, will be printed on blue paper. Fares for Amtrak/non-Amtrak routes, such as the New York-New Orleans-Los

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Congressmen & the Metroliner: A Successful Combination

President Ford made it to Philadelphia on Air Force One but hundreds of his old Capitol Hill friends took the train. Never before had so many Congressmen and their wives and friends been together on one train as there were in the party which left Washington Union Terminal at 4 pm on the afternoon of Friday, September 6, 1974 on their way to the special session of the Bicentennial Continental Congress.

Special arrangements had been made all the way from the steps of the Capitol to the doors of the Metroliner. Across the huge lobby just before the entrance to the trains, tables had been set up for the Doorkeeper of the House of Representatives, William M. "Fishbait" Miller and his staff. Everyone got his welcome and then proceeded past the construction work, that is turning the Station into a Visitors' Center, to the Metroliner set of six sparkling cars.

Station Manager Paul Dowell and his staff and many other Amtrak personnel had worked along with Penn Central representatives to assure that this train would be exemplary. A walkie-talkie network informed Governor Shapp's personal representative when the last congressman was crossing the lobby and Harold Graham and Doug Willmott gave the signal to let it roll.

On board, Bob Herman and his men were ready to go and the Am-

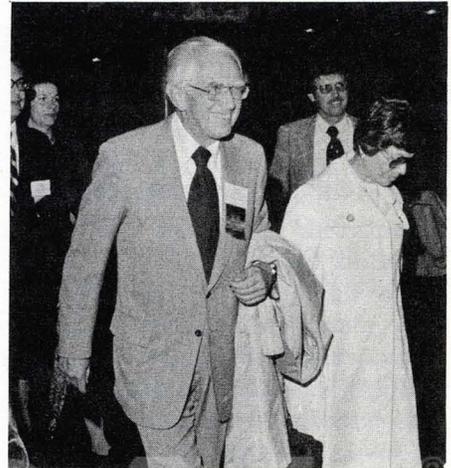
trak on-board crew was fully augmented for this occasion. Christie Koontz had an extra complement of PSR's on duty and the State of Pennsylvania had selected National Guard officers in each car.

As this non-stop special sped from Washington to Philadelphia, the party became lively and everyone visited from one car to another. Gov. Shapp of Pennsylvania had the foresight to send three guitar players down to ride the train and from car to car you could hear veteran Congressmen joining in with "I've Been Working on the Railroad" or such other topical songs.

We did not see Roger Lewis, Amtrak's President, sit down once on the whole trip as he traveled from car to car speaking to old friends and meeting new ones. Amtrak's Board of Directors was represented, in addition to Lewis, by the Honorable Claude S. Brinegar, Secretary of Transportation; Gerald Morgan; Joseph MacDonald and Charles Luna. Ed Edel, VP-Public Relations and Harold Graham, VP-Marketing saw to it that everyone from one end of the train to the other had as pleasant a ride as possible.

As if to underscore the significance of the new agreement between Amtrak and Greyhound, an agreement signed recently by Roger Lewis and Greyhound's President James L. Kerrigan, the whole party was picked up by gleaming new M-8 buses at the door of the Philadelphia Station. Everyone was pleasantly surprised by the fully costumed famous "Mummer's Bands" standing at the top of the stairs in the Philadelphia Station lobby. Their costumes were as striking as Mardi Gras and their music was so typical of that old Philadelphia tradition.

Even though it was raining lightly, everyone was delivered dry and comfortably at the huge outdoor garden party tent on Independence Mall in Philadelphia. The speeches that



evening echoed the significance of this historical event. President Ford topped it off by reading extracts from the text of the original Congress in a manner which was altogether fitting for this special event.

The return trip was a repeat of the trip north beginning with the bus ride through the wet city flanked by Philadelphia's best mounted on more horses than we have seen in one place in years. The Metroliner was ready to go as soon as everyone was aboard. The familiar "Metro Blue" signal was given and the trip back to Washington put a close on a momentous day.

A certain amount of incidental history may have been made on that day, thanks to Governor Shapp and the other governors of the original thirteen states. Also an important bit of history was made for Amtrak since a large number of those Senators and Members of the House had not been on the Metroliner before. Amtrak looked good that day and we are quite certain that Amtrak made some new friends and acquaintances in the halls of Congress.

Top photo: Amtrak President Roger Lewis greets Cong. Robert McClory of Ill. and below Sen. Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio boards the Metro. Left: Guitarist entertains Sen. Strom Thurmond of S.C. and his wife, Nancy.



Norm Taven photos

TARIFF— (Continued from page 6)

Angeles line, will be printed on green paper as Chapter Four. Chapter Five, on pink paper, will contain miscellaneous tables.

"One advantage of the loose-leaf arrangement is that the tariff will be more economical and faster for us to print in the future. Since the binders and index tabs are expensive, however, employees should keep them at work locations because they will not be replaced," continued Paul.

Amtrak has made great strides in improving the tariff over the past three years. When Amtrak began the monumental task of combining the tariffs of pre-Amtrak railroads, the file of tariffs was almost incompre-

hensible. Each railroad had its own tariff, most were not standardized with the others. All of these were sorted out, collected into one document and arranged in a simplified form.

With this step complete, the Fares and Tariffs office began the task of standardizing rates so that those in one part of the country began to bear some semblance to those in others. This resulted in a simple and meaningful document useful throughout the Amtrak system.

Like the national timetables and the system-wide reservations and information system, the new tariff is an achievement which plays an im-

portant part in the success of Amtrak.

The tariffs are distributed to all Amtrak ticket, sales and service offices, reservation and information centers, regional and headquarters personnel, and Amtrak authorized travel agents. Approximately 11,500 of the new tariffs are being printed.

The Fares and Tariffs office also issues a consolidated on-train fares rulebook and 22 individual route tariffs for use by conductors and trainmen. The route tariff is easily used by on-train personnel to determine fares for on-board ticket sales and adjustments on a specific line.

FLYING—

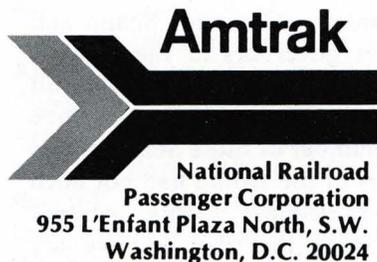
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travel on short notice and advance reservations are not possible. Amtrak personnel are certainly not going to "bump" a paying passenger from a train. On the Broadway Limited route, for example, ridership was up 48 percent in the first six months of 1974 over the same period a year ago. Another consideration regarding available space is that most of the long-haul routes only have one train a

day each way. So far this year, these trains are booked at least one or two weeks in advance.

Amtrak has reemphasized to all employees its internal guideline on travel. It reads: "The Department Head approving the travel will determine the mode of transportation—rail, air or automobile, depending upon urgency, purpose of trip and consideration of minimal cost. Whenever possible, rail travel should be used."

That employees are following this policy is shown by the fact, as revealed by the recent Government Accounting Office study, that Amtrak's average monthly air travel billings thus far in 1974 are \$42,000, as compared with \$55,417 in 1973. And this should be regarded as even more of an accomplishment considering the unavailability of space on so many of Amtrak's reserved trains in 1974 and the company's growth in numbers of employees.



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