

Amtrak Calls on Surface Transportation Board to Investigate Canadian National Railway

Seeks remedy to CN caused delays affecting Illinois passengers

WASHINGTON, Sept. 2, 2014 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- In support of passengers, state partners and its own business operations, Amtrak is taking action to improve the on-time performance (OTP) of its trains that operate over tracks controlled by other railroads. Under federal law, Amtrak has a statutory right to preference in the dispatching of intercity passenger trains before freight trains.

In an [Amended Complaint](#) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) on Aug. 29, Amtrak is seeking an investigation of Canadian National Railway (CN) for causing unacceptable train delays on the [Illini/Saluki service](#) that uses the CN line from Chicago to Carbondale, Ill.

Specifically, the OTP of the Illini/Saluki service was 49 percent for the quarter ending June 30 and just 42 percent for the prior quarter. In fact, the OTP for this state-supported service has been below 80 percent for three solid years and below 60 percent for most of that time. Amtrak is taking this action under Section 213 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) which mandates that the STB initiate an investigation upon the filing of a complaint by Amtrak if the OTP of an intercity passenger train falls below 80 percent for two consecutive quarters.

The Amended Complaint is part of the same case that Amtrak filed with the STB regarding CN's performance in January 2012. The proceedings were stayed while Amtrak and CN attempted to address the issue of delays informally, but OTP has remained poor on the Illini/Saluki service. Therefore, Amtrak is now asking the STB to investigate the causes of delay on that service, and to award damages and other relief if violations of Amtrak's right to preference are found.

Poor on-time performance creates a major disruption for Amtrak customers due to delayed trains and missed connections. It also negatively impacts Amtrak and state-supported services through decreased ridership, lost revenues and higher operating costs.

SOURCE Amtrak