



OIG reviews Amtrak's compliance with annual physical exam requirements for locomotive engineers

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WASHINGTON – A review of Amtrak's compliance with its self-imposed annual physical exam requirement for locomotive engineers found that about a third of them did not meet it before the company suspended the requirement, in part because of the COVID-19 pandemic, an OIG report released today found.

The report noted, however, that the engineers had passed a triennial physical exam to meet Federal Railroad Administration requirements. This summer, Amtrak indefinitely suspended the annual physical exam requirement because of additional risk of exposure to COVID-19 and the continued difficulty faced by these employees to meet the requirement under those circumstances.

Company officials told the OIG that they viewed the suspension as temporary and plan to reinstate the requirement once the pandemic abates. The company will still require engineers to pass triennial exams in line with federal requirements.

The report identified factors which likely contributed to noncompliance of the annual requirement. For example, transportation department officials were more concerned with enforcing the FRA's triennial requirement as part of the certification process to operate a locomotive. Additionally, supervisors did not have a process to remove noncompliant engineers from service.

If Amtrak reinstates the annual physical exam requirement, the company may consider adopting more rigorous processes to enforce the requirement and designating in policy a senior accountable official to ensure that supervisors are enforcing the annual requirement, the report said. The company told the OIG in October 2021 that the Vice President for Transportation will be the accountable official responsible for enforcing compliance if the requirement is reinstated.

More information is included in the full report which can be downloaded on the OIG's website: <https://direc.to/hVtt>.

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