



April 1, 2013

The Honorable Henry A. Waxman
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight
Committee on Environment and Public Works

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife
Committee on Environment and Public Works

Dear Co-Chairs Waxman, Whitehouse, Markey and Cardin:

Your February 25, 2013 letter asked a series of questions regarding what Amtrak is doing to address climate change issues. The first part of your request focused on compliance with the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act as well as Executive Order 13514. Because Congress has mandated that Amtrak “shall be operated and managed as a for-profit corporation and . . . is not a department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government, and shall not be subject to title 31,”¹ neither of these requirements applies to Amtrak directly. Likewise, the second part of your request is largely inapplicable to Amtrak because, unlike a federal government agency such as the EPA, Amtrak has no authority to require others either to reduce emissions or to become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Nevertheless, Amtrak shares your concern regarding climate change and related environmental issues. In order to assess Amtrak’s efforts in this area, which are largely voluntary and not mandated by any federal statute, regulation, or executive order, OIG obtained the following information from various sources within Amtrak and subsequently requested that company management confirm the reliability of this information.

Amtrak informed us that it has initiated efforts in each of the following areas: (1) reducing energy use in Amtrak-owned and leased buildings, (2) reducing greenhouse gas emissions,

¹ 49 U.S.C. § 24301(a)(2) and (3).

principally in connection with diesel locomotives, (3) reducing reliance on petroleum products, and (4) increasing environmental sustainability and adaptation.

In 2003, Amtrak became a charter member of the Chicago Climate Exchange and committed to reduce emissions from locomotive diesel fuel by 6 percent (6%) between 2003 and 2010. According to Amtrak, it exceeded this goal through various initiatives including anti-idling practices, installation of automatic start/stop devices on its locomotives, improvements in rolling stock, locomotive upgrades, and improved training for locomotive engineers.

In 2009, Amtrak joined The Climate Registry (TCR) and committed to produce a comprehensive Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory for all operations. The first annual submission was for calendar year 2010. Using data from the 2011 GHG Inventory, Amtrak has established an annual reduction goal of 1% per year for the next five years for metric tons of GHG per seat mile and metric tons of GHG per passenger mile. Amtrak recently made the decision to switch to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) for publicly reporting GHG Inventory as well as other sustainability information. In addition, Amtrak receives periodic requests from state and local agencies as well as regional planning commissions for emissions data, including fuel used and GHG emissions, and it provides this information as requested.

Amtrak signed onto the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Sustainability Commitment in 2009 as one of the founding signatories. Like the original commitment to TCR, the APTA Commitment requires establishing a baseline inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, and it also requires a broader survey of other parameters such as water and energy usage, waste and recycling, and air emissions of criteria pollutants. Amtrak recently applied for the Bronze recognition level under this program by demonstrating achievement of the core principles and action items, and by setting specific reduction goals for fuel and energy consumption.

In 2011, Amtrak became a signatory to the Sustainability Declaration of the International Union of Railways (UIC). In signing the Declaration, Amtrak and other UIC members expressed their intent to continue to improve sustainability and to make a clear statement of this commitment to stakeholders and the general public.

In addition, one of Amtrak's key strategic goals, as outlined in its 2011-2015 Strategic Plan, is to "Contribute to the nation's environmental health by attracting automobile and air travelers to trains, while improving Amtrak's efficiency and reducing transportation-related carbon emissions and fossil fuel consumption."

In order to achieve this goal, Amtrak is focusing on reducing consumption of electricity, natural gas, and diesel fuel in order to increase environmental sustainability and adaptation. To date, Amtrak reported that it has accomplished the following:

- Decreased electricity usage by 3.7% in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 compared to baseline usage in FY 2011

- Decreased natural gas usage by 42% in FY 2012 compared to baseline usage in FY 2010
- Installed 7,000 Energy Efficient lighting fixtures in FY 2010 and FY 2011 with a projected reduction of 11 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity and savings of \$1.1 million annually.
- Performed 15 Energy Audits at Amtrak's largest sites in FY 2012 and developed an Energy Reduction Plan for each site.
- De-commissioned the Chicago Yard Steam Plant in FY 2010 and installed point of use heating and de-icing boilers, funded partially by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). Reduced natural gas usage by 2 million Therms and expense by \$2 million annually. Received a \$580,000 rebate from the State of Illinois for natural gas reduction.
- Performed 5 compressed air audits in FY 2012 and as a result identified and repaired 200 leaks and 1 million kWh of wasted energy due to improperly sized compressors and dryers.
- Developed and distributed utilities reduction guidelines to assist facility managers in reducing energy.
- Installed new ground power at St. Louis; working toward installation at Newport News and Milwaukee.
- Initiated Environmental sustainability audits.
- Completed a successful field trial using a 20% renewable biodiesel fuel blend to power a daily interstate passenger train on the daily Heartland Flyer between Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Fort Worth, Texas, funded by a grant from the Federal Railroad Administration and in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.
- Procured two generator set (GENSET) locomotives in California, and two in Chicago, both funded by state grants. This new type of locomotive reduces fuel consumption and emissions when compared to a single engine switcher.
- In addition to the new GENSETs in California and Chicago, Amtrak will replace existing diesel engines in two switcher locomotives with GENSET engines for use at the Washington DC (Ivy City) yard. Amtrak is working in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG), who is the recipient of a Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grant awarded through EPA's National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program. Amtrak is providing approximately 25% matching funds.
- Amtrak has installed automatic engine start/ stop systems on its diesel fleet to minimize locomotive idling, which is necessary to keep locomotives from freezing.
- The new ACS 64 electric locomotives to be used on the Northeast Corridor (NEC) are designed to send a maximum of 5 megawatts (MW) of power to the catenary (as compared to current regeneration of 3 MW maximum) during braking. 5 MW regeneration eliminates the need for dynamic brake grids on the locomotive, which

produced heat, and sends 2 additional MW into the catenary for use by other locomotives operating on the NEC, thereby reducing demand for electricity.

For the current fiscal year, Amtrak plans to replace an additional 3,000 light fixtures, with a projected reduction of 5 million kWh and savings of \$500,000 annually, and will perform 3 additional compressed air audits. In addition, Amtrak recently drafted a Sustainability Policy that outlines a corporate Sustainability Program to support various initiatives, including fuel and energy conservation efforts. The draft Policy and Program currently are under review at the executive level.

If you have any questions, please contact David Warren, Assistant Inspector General, Audits, at (202) 906-4742 (David.Warren@amtrakoig.gov) or me at (202) 906-4499 (Ted.Alves@amtrakoig.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Alves", followed by a long, wavy horizontal line.

Ted Alves
Inspector General

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 25, 2013

Mr. Ted Alves
Inspector General
Amtrak
10 G Street N.E., Suite 3W-300
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Mr. Alves:

Earlier this month, the Government Accountability Office added climate change to its High Risk List. GAO found that climate change “presents a significant financial risk to the federal government.” According to GAO, “[t]he federal government is not well organized to address the fiscal exposure presented by climate change.” As the co-chairs of the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, we are seeking your help in assessing whether Amtrak is doing everything it can to confront this growing threat.

There are existing requirements that federal agencies carry out policies to address climate change. In 2007, Congress enacted the Energy Independence and Security Act, which requires federal agencies to reduce the energy intensity of federal buildings 30% by 2015, to achieve even greater reductions when renovating existing buildings or constructing new ones, and to designate an energy manager to conduct evaluations and commissioning processes. In 2009, the President issued Executive Order 13514, which directs federal agencies to establish a greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2020, to reduce vehicle fleet petroleum use by 30% by 2020, and to ensure that 95% of applicable contracts meet sustainability requirements. The order also required the agencies to “evaluate agency climate-change risks and vulnerabilities to manage the effects of climate change on the agency’s operations and mission in both the short and long term.” In 2010, the President announced that the federal government will reduce its greenhouse gas pollution by 28% by 2020 as a result of targets submitted under Executive Order 13514.

Additionally, the President issued a memorandum requiring agencies to enhance their building energy efficiency through performance-based contracts totaling a minimum of \$2 billion across the federal government. Federal agencies also recently released their latest Strategic Sustainability Performance plans, which for the first time include their plans “to reduce the vulnerability of Federal programs, assets, and investments to the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise or more frequent or severe extreme weather.”

As the first part of our request, we ask that you (1) identify the existing requirements in legislation, regulation, executive order, and other directives that apply to the government entity you oversee, (2) assess whether it is meeting these requirements, and (3) if it is not fully meeting the requirements, make recommendations for improving its performance.

In his State of the Union address, the President recognized that additional action by federal agencies is needed to combat climate change. The President called upon federal agencies to "identify additional executive actions from across the administration to help reduce pollution, prepare our cities and nation for the worsening effects of climate change, and accelerate the transition to more sustainable sources of energy." This call to action presents an opportunity and obligation for agencies to develop strategies to meet the challenge of preventing and responding to climate change.

As the second part of our request, we seek your assessment of (1) the authorities the government entity you oversee has to reduce emissions of heat-trapping pollution, (2) its authorities to make the nation more resilient to the effects of climate change, and (3) the most effective additional steps it could take to reduce emissions or strengthen resiliency.

Because this is now a timely matter before both the executive and legislative branches, we ask that you provide answers to these questions as expeditiously as possible, ideally no later than March 29, 2013. If you have any questions, you can contact Kiren Gopal of Rep. Waxman's House Energy and Commerce Committee staff at Kiren.Gopal@mail.house.gov or Emily Enderle of Sen. Whitehouse's staff at Emily_Enderle@whitehouse.senate.gov.

Thank you for your assistance.

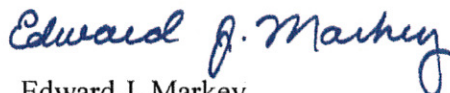
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