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**Subject:** HSR bid too good to be True? More problems in San Diego.

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**From:** Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)

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**To:** ntbraymer@yahoo.com;

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**Date:** Monday, April 15, 2013 9:30 AM

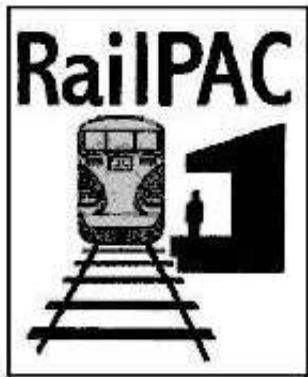
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## **RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for April 15, 2013**

**Edited by Noel T. Braymer**

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**Rail Passenger Association of California**  
**[www.railpac.org](http://www.railpac.org)**  
**Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!**



This is the view Monday through Friday in San Diego of three Coaster trains stored most of the morning and afternoon between rush hours when not in use. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

### [RailPAC President writes Caltrans about the Surfliners becoming Coasters](#)

NOTE: This letter from Paul Dyson and Noel Braymer's article below express the RailPAC opinions on this subject.

### [Amtrak plans to stop Surfliners at Coaster stations too](#)

Comments by Noel T. Braymer

Turning 3 Surfliners into commuter trains may save one county money to expand its commuter service but cost the State income by discouraging higher income ridership of these trains.

### [RailPAC President writes CPUC re Sprinter](#)

I am writing to request that you initiate a thorough inquiry into the competence of North County Transit District to operate this rail transit service and the "Coaster" commuter line. On or about March 7th of this year CPUC inspectors found fault with the brakes on the Sprinter trains and within 24 hours the system was shut down. The management of NCTD has blamed an individual maintenance manager and the sub-contractor for failing to report the problem.

### [The complicated history of the Sprinter](#)

Report and Photo by Noel T. Braymer

**The issue of how and when the excessive wear was discovered on the rotors of some Sprinter brakes brings up several disturbing questions.**

- 1) Why did the PUC approve the Maintenance of the Sprinters largely without physical inspections of the the trains for over 5 years?
- 2) How could management of NCTD be unaware of these problems with the rotors going back to 2009?
- 3) How could a senior engineer go about looking for quotes for new rotors long before these rotors should need replacing without the knowledge of his supervisors?

**It is amazing that the mechanics and the NCTD engineer in charge of Sprinter maintenance knew only a year after the start of Sprinter service that there was a problem with these rotors, but not management. In 2009 this engineer was contacting manufacturers about replacement rotors and it was 3 years before he got a reply. Still there is no word if the cause of this excessive wear and a solution to stop it has been found. NB**

### [NCTD orders new split disc rotors, continues Sprinter service tests](#)

Progressive Rail Roding-Apr 10, 2013

Kovis D.O.O. of Slovenia is producing the split discs. This week's order includes discs for all 12 vehicles in the fleet, as well as spares. In total, NCTD plans to have 130 split discs in stock, as well as 96 to outfit the Sprinter fleet and 34 spares, agency officials said.

### [All Aboard: Amtrak to Add Stops in Encinitas](#)

Patch.com- Apr 10, 2013

Amtrak officials are putting the finishing touches on plans to add stops in Encinitas on the Pacific Surfliner's schedule, according to an Amtrak spokeswoman.

**So who has approved this schedule change to trains subsidized by the State of California? NB**

### [Amtrak train derails near Fremont](#)

San Francisco Chronicle - Apr 14, 2013

An Amtrak train heading to Vancouver, B.C., derailed just north of Fremont Saturday night, but no one aboard was harmed, an Amtrak spokeswoman said. Amtrak Train No. 14, the Coast Starlight, left Los Angeles at 10:10 a.m. Saturday and was scheduled to ... **Vancouver ???**

### [Puppy tied to train tracks has lucky escape thanks to rail engineer](#)

AOL Travel UK-Apr 10, 2013

The incident happened on the afternoon of Tuesday 2 April, at about 5pm on tracks in the Mecca area of California, according to the Riverside ...

### [High-Speed Rail Authority needs loan to mitigate legal delays](#)

89.3 KPCC (blog)- Apr 10, 2013

A State Assembly budget committee voted Wednesday to approve a loan for the High-Speed Rail Authority.

The \$26.2 million would cover operating costs for the agency that's building California's bullet train while it seeks to resolve legal challenges over its use of voter-approved bonds.

### [SBA and High Speed Rail to sign alliance](#)

Central Valley Business Times - Apr 10, 2013

The U.S. Small Business Administration and the California High Speed Rail Authority will sign a strategic alliance on Friday in Fresno outlining expanded outreach and marketing in support of small businesses utilization for High Speed Rail work.

### [Bids to start high-speed rail hundreds of millions below estimates](#)

Fresno Bee - Apr 12, 2013

The consortium of Tutor Perini Corp. of Sylmar, Zachry Construction Corp. of Texas and Parsons Corp. of Pasadena offered the low bid of less than \$1 billion.

**If it sounds too good... Tutor Periini has a long history of making very low bids on big projects, but soon work gets behind schedule and way over budget as happened on the Red Line in Los Angeles. Their customers often end up with years of legal battles against this company.**

### [Low bid on subway station could cost SF](#)

Aug 10, 2012 – Tutor-Saliba Corp.'s \$239 million bid to build the Chinatown station for the planned Central Subway is the lowest of four bids being evaluated ...

A construction giant with a history of cost overruns and expensive legal battles is the leading candidate to build a new subway station in San Francisco.

### [A Seriously Appalling Merger](#)

By Tim Hanson July 30, 2008

There are sweetheart deals, and then there are sweetheart deals. For construction mogul Ron Tutor, the imminent merger of construction giant Perini and his own closely held Tutor-Saliba is one heck of a sweetheart deal for him.

It is not, however, a sweetheart deal for Perini shareholders, who have watched their company's stock plummet from a high of more than \$70 per share in July 2007 to just \$27 and change today.

### [Brown wants China aboard California's high-speed rail project](#)

Los Angeles Times- Apr 11, 2013

On Thursday evening, Brown, Richard and representatives of California-based railroad companies rode China's sleek bullet train to this bustling port city from Beijing, a five-hour trip that covered about 750 miles, roughly the distance from San Diego to the Oregon border.

### [Why Would a Foreign Country Finance California High Speed Rail?](#)

Analysis by Noel T. Braymer

What might other countries want from California? There is the prestige of building the first true High Speed Rail service in the United States. Many countries could use the economic stimulus of such a major project for their industries and this could open the door for more projects around the United States in the future. China might want better relations with the United States and less criticism of it in this country. Developing better ties and gaining influence in California will increase another country's influence throughout the United States. Japan and South Korea who have differences with China might want to block China from gaining influence here.

### [In Pacoima train-truck crash, Metrolink credits crash-resistant train car for limiting injuries](#)

Los Angeles Daily News-Apr 7, 2013

The truck was hit by a train that was running with the engine at its rear-end, and a "crash energy management car" at the front. That is the normal "push-pull" configuration for trains running towards Union Station, Metrolink officials said.

### [Father, son seek \\$5 million damages in crash with Metrolink train ...](#)

Ventura County Star-Apr 8, 2013

Alfred Espinoza told officials at the scene he paused halfway across the tracks because he didn't know which way to go in the strawberry field. Suddenly, he heard the train horn.

"I tried to gas it and get all the way across, but there was no time,"

### [Train Runs From Riverside To Angel Games](#)

Riverside Press-Enterprise Apr 8, 2013

Metrolink will again run a train from Riverside to Angels games and back on Friday nights this season.