
Subject: Wow, video shows what's wrong with today's FRA Safety Specs

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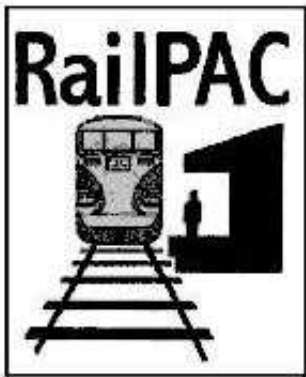
Date: Monday, June 17, 2013 9:30 AM

RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for June 17, 2013

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California
www.railpac.org
Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



This is a graphic from a recent report by ACE of their plans over the next 10 years. This includes major track work to straighten and reduce running times. Also planned are raising to 6 from 4 round trips between Stockton and San Jose by 2018. Up to 10 round trips are planned by 2022. Also planned by 2022 will be 6 round trips between Stockton and Merced. ACE is working with the UP on track improvements needed to make this happen.

[Rail projects mean thousands of jobs](#)

Stockton Record-Jun 11, 2013

STOCKTON - There are roughly \$2 billion in passenger rail construction and improvement projects coming in the next year, including at least \$300 million of spending earmarked for small businesses, for the Bay Area and Central Valley.

And those are opportunities area companies shouldn't pass up, said Michael Ammann, chief executive of the San Joaquin Partnership.

[Federal oversight board OKs Calif. high-speed rail](#)

San Jose Mercury News- Jun 13, 2013

In a 67-page decision issued Thursday, the Surface Transportation Board ruled 2-1 that the state could begin work on the first 65 miles of the project from Merced to Fresno, as long as it maintains the current route and follows through on promises to mitigate damage to the environment caused by construction.

[Not The High Speed Rail, But Another Step In Local Train Service](#)

KIONrightnow.com-Jun 13, 2013

"These track improvements are critical to our upcoming Capitol Corridor rail service extension to Salinas," said Transportation Agency Rail Policy Committee Chair Dave Potter in a news release Thursday. "The more riders that board the train from all stops, including Gilroy, the more financially successful the service will be."

[Tehachapi double-tracking rail project scaled back](#)

Tehachapi News-Jun 11, 2013

Revisions unveiled in early May have the Tehachapi Rail Improvement Project's budget shrinking from roughly \$100 million to about \$25 million. Instead of five "double-track" segments as proposed earlier, there are to be only two.

[Rail project concerns city](#)

Tehachapi News-Jun 11, 2013

Tehachapi City Manager Greg Garrett is concerned that a decision by the California Transportation Commission to proceed with a scaled back Tehachapi Rail Improvement Project may result in a piecemeal approach to the environmental review that leaves citizens of Tehachapi with long-term problems.

[Transportation Authority Board Withholds Money From Metrolink](#)

VoiceofOC-Jun 11, 2013

The Orange County Transportation Authority board of directors decided Monday to postpone increasing its subsidy of Metrolink until the board discusses a forensic audit of the rail authority.

Metrolink has come under heavy scrutiny because of basic accounting failures.

[Slight fare increase, fare policy change effective July 1](#)

Friday June 14, 2013

Metrolink Board adopts 5% system-wide fare increase, as well as changes to Weekend Pass and Personal Care Attendant fare policies. Student fares remain unchanged.

In April Metrolink found a budget shortfall of \$14.5 million dollars for this fiscal year mainly due to increased costs with the PTC program of \$8.3 million, \$2 million increased operating costs in 5 operating contracts and \$1.6 million in costs that had been offset by Rotem's lease of space at the Colton maintenance base. Through belt tightening Metrolink has cut the shortfall to \$10.2 million dollars. The package of fare increases is expected to bring in an additional \$4.1 million dollars, with most of this, \$3.18 million from the 5% general fare increase. In addition Metrolink estimates they are losing \$1.8 million a year from fare evasion. They plan to cut this in half with more aggressive ticket inspections including checking every passengers for tickets before they enter trains at Union Station. The rest of the shortfall is expected to be made up by the member agencies of Metrolink. NB

[Pinching Penny's while Blowing Bucks](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

The area of most contention was the proposed changes to the Free Fare for Personal Care Attendants (PCA). Currently if a disabled person is medically deemed to need help to travel the helper can travel for free. There were proposals to charge the helpers either at full fare, a discounted fare or pay \$25 dollars a year for a Metrolink ID card to register as a PCA. Staff's contention was this policy was being abused to let people travel for free. The Board discussed this at length and put off a final decision until staff returned with a refined motion for the next board meeting. The money raised by charging PCA's for ID badges was expected to bring in no more than \$200,000. **This reminded me of Parkinson's Law of Triviality by C. Northcote Parkinson "The time spent on any item of the agenda will be in inverse proportion to the sum involved."**

[Spain's high-speed rail sees ticket sales soar after service slashes ...](#)

Skift-Jun 12, 2013

Spain's Ministry of Transport this week reported that ridership on Renfe AVE services has risen 14% year-on-year in the last four months to 4.7 million passengers, following an 11% cut in all tourist class tickets in early February.

[Perris Valley Line: Where Does It Go From Here?](#)

Riverside Press-Enterprise Jun 10, 2013

A small Riverside environmental group that persuaded a judge to halt a 24-mile commuter rail line maintains it isn't trying to kill the \$232.7 million project, but make it friendly to the environment and neighborhoods.

[Commission To Appeal Perris Valley Line Ruling](#)

Riverside Press-Enterprise Jun 12, 2013

A regional agency is appealing a Riverside Superior Court decision invalidating an environmental impact report for a \$232.7 million project that would bring commuter rail service to Moreno Valley and Perris, and put trains within reach of southwest Riverside County cities.

[Rail To Redlands An Opportunity For The East Valley](#)

Highland Community News Jun 13, 2013

The ad hoc committee will focus on the Redlands Passenger Rail Project, which seeks to create a passenger rail service system, traversing the east valley to the City of Redlands, alleviating highway congestion while providing an alternative source of transportation to its residents.

[Auditor Finds Major Deficiencies In NCTD's Contracts Department](#)

KPBS-Jun 11, 2013

The SC&H audit -- only recently made public -- found the department is rife with inefficiencies, is buried in paperwork and awards far too many contracts without public bidding. SC&H said NCTD's "inefficient" and "ineffective" methods are putting the district at risk both legally and financially. It found key employees don't talk or collaborate with each other; the agency's billing process is inefficient and prone to error; there is no consistent quality control; and the district fails to monitor state and federal compliance.

[Study: FRA Regulations Make Us Less Safe](#)

StreetsBlog DC Jun 10, 2013

The Federal Railroad Administration's burdensome safety regulations have long been criticized for putting rail transportation in America at a competitive disadvantage. But a new study says it's worse than that even: FRA's over-the-top safety standards actually make us less safe.

**Watch the video on this link to compare what happens with FRA and European crash standards.
NB**

[RSAC recommends passenger rail crashworthiness standards to ...](#)

Railway Track & Structures-Jun 14, 2013

The standards, which FRA is developing now before they are published later this year in a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, will provide baseline safety requirements for next-generation rail equipment that would travel up to speeds of 220 mph on high-speed rail tracks, while providing the flexibility to operate with existing freight and passenger systems up to speeds of 125 mph. Once finalized through the FRA's rulemaking process, the new standards would be employed along the Northeast Corridor and in California, regions both designated for high-speed rail service.

[Cloud Technology Deployed To Make Railway Crossings Safer](#)

Innovation Trail Jun 10, 2013

Despite an overall decline over the past 20 years, in 2012 there were almost 2,000 incidents at railroad crossings in the US, and 300 were fatal.

[BART's top-paid worker of 2012 never worked a day](#)

San Jose Mercury News - Jun 9, 2013