

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy and NJ TRANSIT Celebrate Major Milestone with PTC Certification

12/18/2020

**KEARNY** — Governor Phil Murphy today, alongside NJ TRANSIT Board Chair and Department of Transportation Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett, Amtrak President Stephen Gardner, Federal Railroad Administrator Ron Batory, and Parsons Corporation's Terry Fetters, announced that NJ TRANSIT's Positive Train Control (PTC) system has been certified by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as meeting the December 31, 2020 deadline for implementation. This major accomplishment comes after nearly three years of around the clock work, first to meet the interim milestone for equipment and infrastructure installation at the end of 2018, and then to achieve this certification for full implementation. When Governor Murphy took office in January of 2018, the project was at just 12% completion toward the 2018 interim goal for equipment and infrastructure installation.

"After nearly a decade of neglect and disinvestment under the previous administration, I'm thrilled that NJ TRANSIT's PTC system will today receive certification from the Federal Railroad Administration," **said Governor Murphy**. "Our commitment to meeting this deadline and ensuring the safety of every rider along NJ TRANSIT's rail network is simply an extension of our overall commitment to delivering the world-class transportation experience that NJ TRANSIT customers deserve. As our post-COVID future takes shape in the months ahead, hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans will again turn to our rail system for their commutes and NJ TRANSIT will be ready to get them to their destinations more safely than ever."

"The Federal Railroad Administration's certification of NJ TRANSIT's Positive Train Control system improves safety for our customers by using technology to reduce the risk of human error," **said Transportation Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti**. "It took an amazing effort by our dedicated staff to complete this system on time, and I want to thank everyone who worked so diligently to get this done."

"We could not have been successful without the hard work and dedication of the NJ TRANSIT employees assigned to this project, which was arguably one of the most complex in the country," **said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett**. "Similar to the December 2018 interim milestone, we did what many thought was impossible. In addition to our employees, I want to thank our contractors (Parsons and Alstom), FRA Administrator Ron Batory and his team for their leadership and support, our partners at Amtrak, MTA, SEPTA and the many freight railroads - all of whom were critical to our success. Most importantly, I want to thank our customers for their continued patience and understanding over the last two years while we worked tirelessly to complete PTC and deliver a safer commute."

"We're delighted that NJ TRANSIT has been able to complete their installation of PTC and thank them for the focus and collaboration under Governor Murphy's and CEO Kevin Corbett's leadership over the past few years," **said Amtrak Board Chair Tony Coscia**. "It's clear that NJ TRANSIT and Amtrak share the same commitment to safety, customer service and growth and this stands as another example of how our partnership is delivering value for the public, even in these difficult times."

"As FRA Administrator, one of my greatest privileges has been to oversee—and stand alongside—NJ TRANSIT as it fully implemented FRA-certified and interoperable PTC systems on its network," **said Ronald Batory, Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration**. "I salute and commend the perseverance and commitment at all levels of NJ TRANSIT's team to meeting this important deadline."

"Achieving this critical milestone was made possible by the combined collaboration, innovation, and determination of NJ TRANSIT, Federal Railroad Administration, Parsons and Alstom," **said Chuck Harrington, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer for Parsons**. "The team worked tirelessly through a global pandemic to ensure the safety of New Jersey's rail network."

"This is good news for riders and a significant milestone for NJ TRANSIT in delivering a safe and reliable system for its customers," **said U.S. Senator Bob Menendez, the ranking member of the Senate's transit subcommittee**. "Positive Train Control is a proven life-saving technology that can automatically slow down a train when its operator cannot or



becomes incapacitated for any reason. Full implementation of PTC makes our rails safer and prevents tragedy. After years of delay under the previous administration, Governor Murphy and the leadership at NJ TRANSIT deserve credit for making smart investments and prioritizing the completion of PTC installation in time to meet the federal deadline.”

“The full implementation of this life-saving technology is welcome news for the hundreds of thousands of New Jersey rail passengers who rely on safe and reliable service,” **said U.S. Senator Cory Booker.** “I applaud Governor Murphy and the team at NJ TRANSIT on this significant milestone and for their commitment to passenger safety.”

“This has been a brutal year for New Jerseyans and for our lifeblood transit lines. So it’s welcome news that New Jersey Transit will meet the federal PTC mandate I have championed to ensure the safety of our commuters,” **said Congressman Bill Pascrell, who helped secure federal aid for NJT to install PTC.** “Just in our region over the past several years, the Hoboken Terminal crash, the tragedy on Amtrak outside Philly, and the Metro-North derailment in Spuyten Duyvil show us the need for PTC because it can save lives. I thank Governor Murphy and our transportation leaders for helping us meet this mandate during the pandemic. When we get our system back to full strength commuters will feel more secure in the safety of our system.”

“New Jersey Transit is one of the nation’s busiest commuter rail systems, which is why the addition of Positive Train Control (PTC) technology is so important,” **said Congressman Albio Sires.** “This technology, which is an automatic speed control system that has been around for decades, is instrumental to preventing tragedies. I am glad New Jersey Transit is on track to meet its mandated deadline and that the implementation of these common-sense rail safety standards are nearing completion.”

“New Jersey Transit has completed positive train control upgrades required by the Federal Railroad Administration,” **said Senator Patrick Diegnan, Chair of the New Jersey State Senate Transportation Committee.** “The completion of these integral upgrades will raise the level of rail safety for our riders and transit employees. These upgrades will prevent potential tragedies from occurring on our tracks.”

“Positive Train Control is a critical component of ongoing efforts to improve public transit, as this technology helps reduce train collisions, derailments and other accidents that might otherwise be caused by human error. Under Governor Murphy, NJ TRANSIT inherited a PTC program that was greatly behind and in danger of large fines come next year,” **said Assemblyman Daniel Benson, Chairman of the Assembly Transportation and Independent Authorities Committee.** “Passenger and employee safety must and always will be the number one priority on New Jersey trains. I am pleased NJ TRANSIT has received certification from the Federal Railroad Administration for its implementation of this important technology. Congratulations to Governor Murphy, NJ TRANSIT CEO Kevin Corbett and NJ TRANSIT Board Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti on meeting this important milestone.”

“To have gone from the worst percentage in the nation to full compliance in less than three years while still running the railroad is a great achievement and harbinger for continued improvements to service,” **said Assemblyman John McKeon.**

PTC is technology to enhance rail safety by monitoring and controlling train movements. Using Global Positioning System technology, Wi-Fi and high band radio transmission, PTC is capable of automatically controlling train speeds and movements, thereby reducing the risk of accidents due to human error.

In 2008, Congress passed and the President signed the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, which requires the implementation of a PTC system on all non-exempt commuter railroads, including NJ TRANSIT. In 2015, Congress extended the deadline for full implementation to December 31, 2018, but also allowed FRA to approve any railroad’s request for an alternative schedule, with a final deadline of December 31, 2020, if the railroad demonstrated it met certain statutory criteria by that 2018 interim deadline. PTC is intended to prevent:

1. Train-to-train collisions;
2. Derailments caused by excessive speed;
3. Unauthorized train movements in work zones; and
4. Movement of trains through switches left in the wrong position.

As a new technology, PTC required design, development, prototype testing, retrofitting locomotives and cab cars, installation of 326 miles of wayside equipment including radios, transponders and poles, as well as initiating PTC testing and employee training. PTC systems feature computer-based communications and information technology designed to improve railroad safety. PTC will complement NJ TRANSIT’s existing cab signaling system and Automatic Train Control (ATC) technology.

NJ Transit’s PTC system consists of three main elements:

1. Radio transponders and other equipment onboard locomotives or cab control cars;
2. Antennas, transponders and other equipment along the railroad right-of-way (ROW); and
3. Computer servers and systems for the Rail Operations Center (ROC).

NJ TRANSIT's rail system includes 12 commuter rail lines, most operating on tracks shared with other freight and passenger railroads. On the heavily travelled Northeast Corridor (NEC), which is owned by Amtrak, a different PTC system is in use. Although functionally similar, the various PTC systems need to communicate with one another. The coordination required to ensure interoperability with NJ TRANSIT's five tenant railroads, including the two largest (Conrail and Norfolk Southern), added significant layers of complexity of the project.

Copies of the PTC certification letters can be found at the following links:

Letter 1 ([https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/44/92/20/80/b3f6062ce14d0b7550f89c9a/RRS-201203-002\\_NJTs\\_PTCSP\\_\\_Conditional\\_Approval\\_\\_Conditional\\_Certification\\_of\\_Its\\_ASES\\_II\\_and\\_Certification\\_of\\_Its\\_I-ETMS\\_-FRA-2010-0033\\_signed.pdf](https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/44/92/20/80/b3f6062ce14d0b7550f89c9a/RRS-201203-002_NJTs_PTCSP__Conditional_Approval__Conditional_Certification_of_Its_ASES_II_and_Certification_of_Its_I-ETMS_-FRA-2010-0033_signed.pdf))

Letter 2 ([https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/ea/c8/8a/a7/3c66f98832653acc2db4b194/RRS-201208-003\\_NJT\\_RFA\\_to\\_Its\\_PTCIPVer.\\_10.1\\_Approval\\_-FRA-2010-0033\\_\\_005\\_.pdf](https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/ea/c8/8a/a7/3c66f98832653acc2db4b194/RRS-201208-003_NJT_RFA_to_Its_PTCIPVer._10.1_Approval_-FRA-2010-0033__005_.pdf))

Letter 3 ([https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/ea/c8/8a/a7/3c66f98832653acc2db4b194/RRS-201208-003\\_NJT\\_RFA\\_to\\_Its\\_PTCIPVer.\\_10.1\\_Approval\\_-FRA-2010-0033\\_.pdf](https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20201218/ea/c8/8a/a7/3c66f98832653acc2db4b194/RRS-201208-003_NJT_RFA_to_Its_PTCIPVer._10.1_Approval_-FRA-2010-0033_.pdf))  
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Office of Governor PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000

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