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June 27, 2024

Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT Are Executing Joint Plan to Accelerate Investigations of Disruptions and Improve Reliability Between New Jersey and New York

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Thorough and transparent analysis will address recent challenges and create solutions

NEW YORK – Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT have been accelerating examination, inspection, maintenance, and improvement activities to a variety of infrastructure and fleet systems following a recent spike in Northeast Corridor (NEC) disruptions in New Jersey and New York Penn Station. This will be a holistic effort focused on both Amtrak infrastructure — including the electric traction system that powers trains, the catenary (the system of overhead power

wires that are part of the electric traction system), signals, and switches — and NJ TRANSIT equipment, including the pantograph system that connects to the catenary and draws power for the train.

The execution of the joint action plan follows several major service disruptions in recent months, together with a variety of smaller incidents that have reduced reliability on this key travel corridor. The two companies are working together to investigate the causes of each of these events and to improve service for riders.

“We understand the impact the recent events had on both Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT customers and their families, and we share their frustration,” [Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner](#). “It’s vital we work with NJ TRANSIT to identify the root cause of these disruptions and return to on-time service and the quality experience customers expect.”

“NJ TRANSIT recognizes how disruptive these recent incidents have been to the quality of life of every rail customer who depends on the Northeast Corridor, and we are as frustrated as they are,” NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett. “NJ TRANSIT will continue to work jointly with Amtrak to identify the root causes of these incidents as quickly as possible to restore reliability for all our customers.”

Immediate actions as part of the joint plan include:

- Additional extensive and frequent catenary and track inspections of the approximately 170 track miles between Trenton and New York City to identify any catenary issues that could cause pantograph damage.
- NJ TRANSIT with Amtrak assistance is undertaking visual inspections of all pantographs at key stations and NJ TRANSIT has installed high-resolution cameras to inspect pantographs.
- Externally supported reviews with industry experts to assist root cause analysis and development of solutions.
- Expansion of the helicopter catenary inspection and repair program, which involves taking high-resolution photos of the system, each catenary structure, and their components. The photos are inspected offline to identify priority items for repair.
- A joint review of Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT delays and items impacting reliability, which will result in a prioritized set of investments to address sources of chronic delays.
- Additional longer-term actions to address state of good repair of Amtrak infrastructure, including added resources to expedite testing of transformers in substations; pursuing additional grants to replace catenary, substations and transmission, and signal lines, as well as support capital renewal; and evaluating methods to expand overnight work windows with service adjustments to accelerate renewal and repairs.

Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT will issue regular reports that will include details of our efforts and progress to date, as well as information regarding root causes as they are identified. Further research and development will continue as Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT evaluate other methods to identify conditions and make repairs before service disruptions occur. Once the root causes are identified, Amtrak and NJ TRANSIT will identify or seek additional resources, if necessary, to address issues that are uncovered, while continuing to advance major projects such as

Portal North Bridge and the Hudson Tunnel Project, which will replace the NEC's old and fragile systems entirely with modern and reliable infrastructure for key sections of the NEC in New Jersey and New York. ^

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