

Amtrak *Cascades* Update

Joint Transportation Committee

ROGER MILLAR, Secretary of Transportation

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Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation

Keith Metcalf, Deputy Secretary of Transportation

Agenda

- Opening Remarks – Secretary Millar
- Safety by Mode
- Amtrak Cascades Overview
- NTSB Probable Cause
- NTSB Findings related to WSDOT
- NTSB Recommendations related to WSDOT
- Return to the Point Defiance Bypass

Safety by mode

National fatality rates by mode, per billion passenger-miles traveled ¹

Mode	Rate
Cars, trucks, SUVs	7.3 per billion
Motorcycle	212 per billion
Trains	0.15 per billion ²
Buses	0.11 per billion
Airlines	0.07 per billion

- Comparable rates for walking and bicycling are not available
- Pedestrians and bicyclists make up 15% of annual average highway fatalities

1) Source: Journalist's Resource.org, Harvard Kennedy School's Shorenstein Center; data is for 2000-2009

2) Excludes pedestrians and others not actually on trains

Amtrak Cascades corridor

Amtrak Cascades Service

- Amtrak operates on BNSF and Sound Transit tracks in Washington
- 18 stations from Vancouver, BC to Eugene, Oregon covering 467 miles

Current daily roundtrips

- Four between Seattle and Portland (Six after return to Point Defiance Bypass)
- Two between Seattle and Vancouver, BC
- Two between Portland and Eugene, Oregon

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

- FRA awarded federal grants for 20 projects to improve the Amtrak corridor
Included new tracks, signals, sidings, locomotives, stations, and landslide mitigation
- All projects completed between 2010 and 2017
- PDB Substantial Completion February 2017, Final Acceptance August 2017



NTSB probable cause

“The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the Amtrak 501 derailment was Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority’s failure to provide an effective mitigation for the hazardous curve without positive train control in place, which allowed the Amtrak engineer to enter the 30-mph curve at too high of a speed due to his inadequate training on the territory and inadequate training on the newer equipment.

Contributing to the accident was the Washington State Department of Transportation’s decision to start revenue service without being assured that safety certification and verification had been completed to the level determined in the preliminary hazard assessment.

Contributing to the severity of the accident was the Federal Railroad Administration’s decision to permit railcars that did not meet regulatory strength requirements to be used in revenue passenger service, resulting in (1) the loss of survivable space and (2) the failed articulated railcar-to railcar connections that enabled secondary collisions with the surrounding environment causing severe damage to railcar-body structures which then failed to provide occupant protection resulting in passenger ejections, injuries, and fatalities.”

NTSB findings related to WSDOT

Finding 13

Had WSDOT, Sound Transit, Amtrak, and FRA “been more engaged and assertive during the preparation of the inaugural service, it would have been more likely that safety hazards, such as the speed reduction for the curve would have been better identified and addressed.”

NTSB findings related to WSDOT

Finding 20

“There was no requirement for” WSDOT, Sound Transit or Amtrak “to provide additional protection for the accident curve.”

NTSB findings related to WSDOT

Finding 22

WSDOT “should have provided greater oversight of Sound Transit’s safety certification process.”

NTSB recommendations related to WSDOT

Recommendation 11

“Discontinue the use of the Talgo Series VI trainsets as soon as possible and replace them with passenger railroad equipment that meet all current United States safety requirements.”

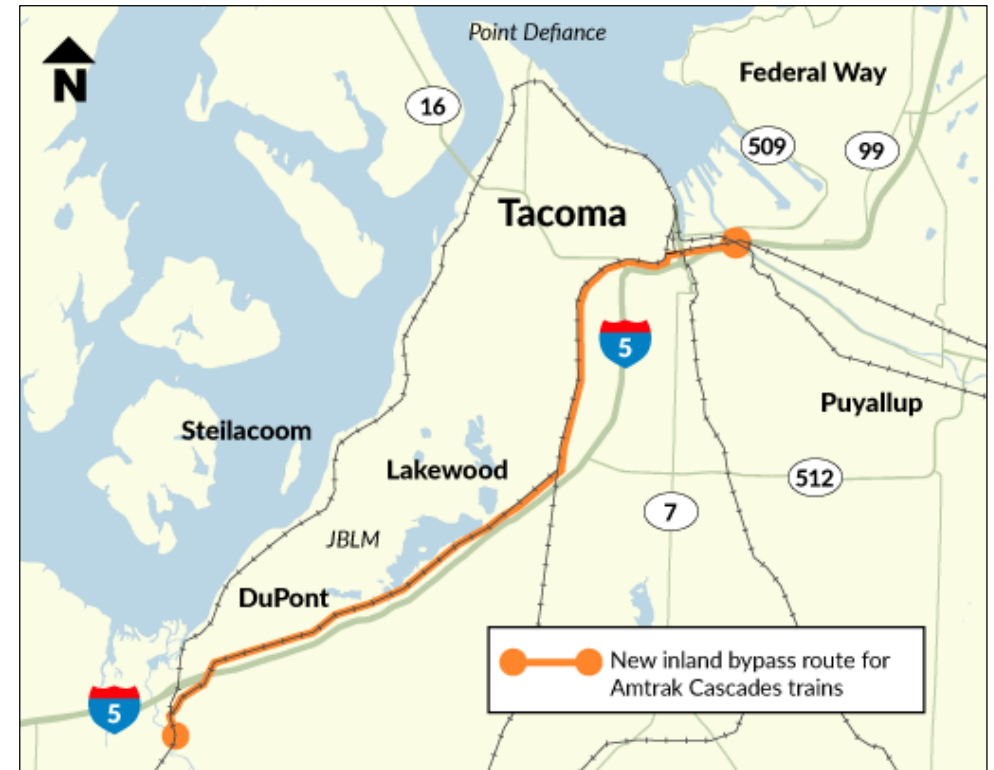
NTSB recommendations related to WSDOT

Recommendation 12

“Develop and implement a program by which all railcar seats that are designed to rotate be checked for proper positioning and securement in place before the railcar can be placed into or returned to passenger carrying service.”

Returning service to Point Defiance Bypass

- Agencies are coordinating to determine next steps in response to the NTSB report.
- The timeline to return Amtrak Cascades and Coast Starlight service to the Point Defiance Bypass will be determined by evaluation of the NTSB final report and agency requirements.
- WSDOT, Amtrak, UTC and Sound Transit will conduct outreach with communities along the Bypass prior to restart of service.



Information

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