

WEEKLY RAIL RECAP

For the week ending SAT, July 6, 2002

By Dave Mears

(NOTE: The expression "ffd" at the end of a news item means "for further details" and usually represents what I believe to be the most helpful news resource if a reader wants more information on a particular item.)

THE WEEK'S TOP NEWS (in chronological order):

(SUN) Via Rail Canada marked one week's service of the first of its new Renaissance passenger cars. The new cars were purchased from Eurostar, which had earlier overordered the cars for English Channel Tunnel service needs that did not materialize. A Via spokesman said that a total of 139 Renaissance cars would be introduced into service through 2003 and expand VIA's existing passenger car fleet by one-third. (ffd: Via Rail Canada)

(MON) Dallas, TX.'s Dallas Area Rapid Transit opened a 10 mile extension of its Red Line light rail line to suburban Richardson, TX. A DART spokesman said that further extensions of its Red and Blue Lines to be opened later this year would effectively double DART's light rail system to 44 miles and 34 stations. (ffd: Progressive Railroading)

(MON) The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration approved the third loan of the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program. The loan, \$12 million to the Mount Hood Railroad, follows earlier loans to I&M Rail Link and the Arkansas & Missouri. The RRIF program was established in 1997 to provide up to \$3.5 billion in loans and guarantees for railroads, with \$1 billion of that amount set aside for short line and regional railroad improvements. (ffd: AAR)

(MON) The West Japan Railway began operating women only cars on selected morning commuter trains into Osaka, Japan. A railway spokesman said that the woman only cars had been introduced in response to increasing complaints by women of being molested aboard overcrowded commuter trains. (ffd: wire services)

(TUE) The U.S. Department of Transportation awarded Amtrak a \$77 million grant to fund improvement in its 4 East and 2 North (Hudson) River tunnels accessing Manhattan. A USDOT spokesman said the grant would fund improvements to the tunnels that will include structural rehabilitation, installation of modernized tunnel ventilation and communication systems, and improvements for emergency access and egress. The tunnels, which were built circa 1910, are used by Amtrak, Long Island Railroad and New Jersey Transit trains that transport approximately 300,000 persons daily. (ffd: USDOT)

(TUE) China and Nigeria announced a tentative agreement for China's Civil Engineering and Construction Company (CCECC) to manage Nigeria's state railway system. A Chinese government spokesman said that the management initiative would follow rehabilitation work on the Nigerian system now being performed by the CCECC. (ffd: Abuja Daily Trust)

(SAT) Torrential rains and resulting flooding in western Texas hampered rail operations there. The flooding forced freight railroads to temporarily suspended services in several portions of the region. Also, Amtrak temporarily annulled some passenger trains to and through San Antonio, TX., busing passengers around flooded sections to West Texas destinations. (ffd: wire services)

(SAT) Baltimore, MD.'s Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum announced that it would hold a 2 day celebration at the museum July 13 and 14 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Western Maryland Railway. The museum's director, Courtney Wilson, said that the celebration would include exhibits and lectures on the history of the WM, as well as debut a newly restored WM locomotive. The WM was absorbed by CSX predecessor Chessie System in the 1970's. (ffd: B&O Railroad Museum)

STATS:

(THU) For the week ending June 29, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 1.9 percent from the comparable week last year, up 0.2 percent in the East and up 3.2 percent in the West. Also for the week ending June 29, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 7.4 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 4.5 percent and Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 14.4 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week last year.

For the month of June, 2002 and comparing with June, 2001, U.S. carload rail traffic was up 2.1 percent. Notable traffic

increases included metallic ores up 39.7 percent, nonmetallic minerals up 11.0 percent, chemicals up 6.6 percent and lumber and wood products up 5.8 percent; notable traffic decreases included coke down 12.0 percent and coal down 1.8 percent. Also for the month of June, 2002 and also comparing with June, 2001, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 8.6 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 2.5 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 13.4 percent, Mexico's Transportacion Ferroviaria Mexicana's carload rail traffic was up 12.3 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 6.8 percent.

For the period January 1 through June 30, U.S. carload rail traffic was down 2.3 percent, U.S. intermodal rail traffic was up 4.1 percent, Canadian carload rail traffic was down 3.0 percent, Canadian intermodal rail traffic was up 7.0 percent, TFM's carload rail traffic was up 1.6 percent and TFM's intermodal rail traffic was up 15.0 percent, all when ranked with the comparable week period last year. (ffd: AAR)

ACQUISITIONS, ABANDONMENTS AND ALIKE:

(MON) Burlington Northern Santa Fe filed to abandon its line between Powers Lake, ND. and Grenora, ND., totaling approximately 61 miles. (ffd: STB)

(TUE) The U.S. Surface Transportation Board granted preliminary approval for the Pemiscot County Port Authority of Missouri to construct a line, approximately 5 miles in length, between PCPA's port on the Mississippi River and Hayti, MO. (ffd: STB)

(TUE) Canadian Pacific Railway granted Norfolk Southern trackage rights over CPR's Delaware and Hudson Line between Sunbury, PA. and Mechanicsville, NY. (ffd: CPR Corp., NS Corp.)

(FRI) The Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range filed to abandon approximately 2 miles of its Silver Branch in Virginia, MN. (ffd: STB)

CHANGING PEOPLE AND PLACES:

None of note this holiday week.

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(CORRECTION: In last week's edition, I mentioned the scheduled August opening of a new station on the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Worcester commuter rail line in Ashton, MA. In fact, the station to open on the line is in Ashland, MA. Thanks to Bill Moll for his update here.)

Weekly Rail Recap is edited from public news sources and published weekly, usually on Sunday or Monday, to the rail and transit industries and those interested in them. Send an e-mail to djmservices@aol.com to receive it, with my compliments.

HAVE A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS WEEK,  
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