

## **Q4 Report to Legislature January 2022**

### **Summary**

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) co-funds the Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Ridership has been trending higher since service levels resumed to pre-pandemic levels in May 2021 with a dip in ridership in August and September that is most likely attributable to increases in COVID cases. Oregon launched a marketing campaign in April focused on the measures being taken to ensure passenger safety with COVID. Ridership trended upwards with the launch of this campaign. The campaign was paused in July and relaunched in October with a focus on tourism, activities, and places to visit along the Portland to Eugene route. Ridership began trending upward again with the relaunch. See attached chart that shows ridership in relationship to the marketing campaign.

On-time performance (OTP) remained a challenge in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2021. Union Pacific (UP) imposed slow orders due to weather-related issues and track maintenance. Two trespasser fatalities resulted in large increments of delay that also impacted return schedules with the same equipment. During this quarter, several instances of delay were attributable to locomotive problems with the 32-year old Amtrak Horizon fleet. Interference resulting from other trains, freight and passenger, continues to be the predominant cause of delays, especially southbound from Washington to Oregon due to programmed track maintenance resulting in single-track operation at various locations with double track.

New Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Amtrak-funded Siemens trainsets are underway with planned introduction to service in 2026-2027. The Amtrak Cascades will receive the first production equipment. It is early in the procurement process so the delivery schedule may change as states and Amtrak navigate the complex manufacturing and testing process. Most equipment and some infrastructure improvement costs are included in that funding with states responsible for some route-specific costs and eventually trainset maintenance.

Midway through Q4, passenger train operation switched from the route along Puget Sound to the new Point Defiance Bypass between Tacoma and Olympia, which was built to allow for increased service of six round trips between Seattle and Portland as the old route could not support that higher frequency. The new route is five miles shorter and scheduled travel time for Amtrak Cascades trains between Portland and Seattle was shortened from 3 hours 30 minutes to 3 hours 25 minutes. Because the bypass includes a long stretch of single-track at its southern end with no passing sidings, there is potential for delay-causing conflicts when trains have to travel the bypass outside of their normal time slot.

### **Status**

#### **Ridership for October to December 2021\***

- October to December 2021 ridership increased year-over-year as compared to the same period in 2020.
- Ridership peaked in July 2021, dropped slightly in August and September, and then increased in October 2021 through December. Ridership for this quarter is tracking with the

2019 pre-pandemic ridership trends for the same quarter. Commonly, ridership begins to peak in October and continues through December. This is the pattern we are currently seeing.

- Ridership increased 2% from September to October, increased 28% from October to November, and 9% from November to December. November and December historically bring higher ridership due to holidays in both months.

*\* In October 2021, Amtrak changed to a new system for ridership data reporting. These data have been reviewed and closely track the previous data received.*

### **On-Time Performance for October to December 2021**

- OTP for northbound trains averaged 70% and southbound trains averaged 38%.
- Delays this quarter were caused by:
  - 79% - Host railroad
  - 16% - Amtrak
  - 6% - Unassignable (i.e., trespasser strikes, weather-related delays, and movable bridge openings)
- The most significant delay causes for the quarter include:
  - Weather-related delays due to snow, excessive rain and high wind, bringing about flooding, mudslides and debris on the tracks. Impacts with fallen trees caused delays and damage to equipment;
  - Freight train interference;
  - Increased train and trespasser incidents. Freight train trespasser strikes often impact passenger trains because authorities stop all train traffic while conducting their investigation. These investigations can sometimes exceed three hours; and
  - Reliability issues with operation of the century-old Steel Bridge across the Willamette River, which affects arrivals and departures at Portland's Union Station.
- The single main track between Portland and Eugene includes 12 passing sidings, eight to ten miles apart. However, these sidings are insufficient to avoid delays from passenger and freight train interference.

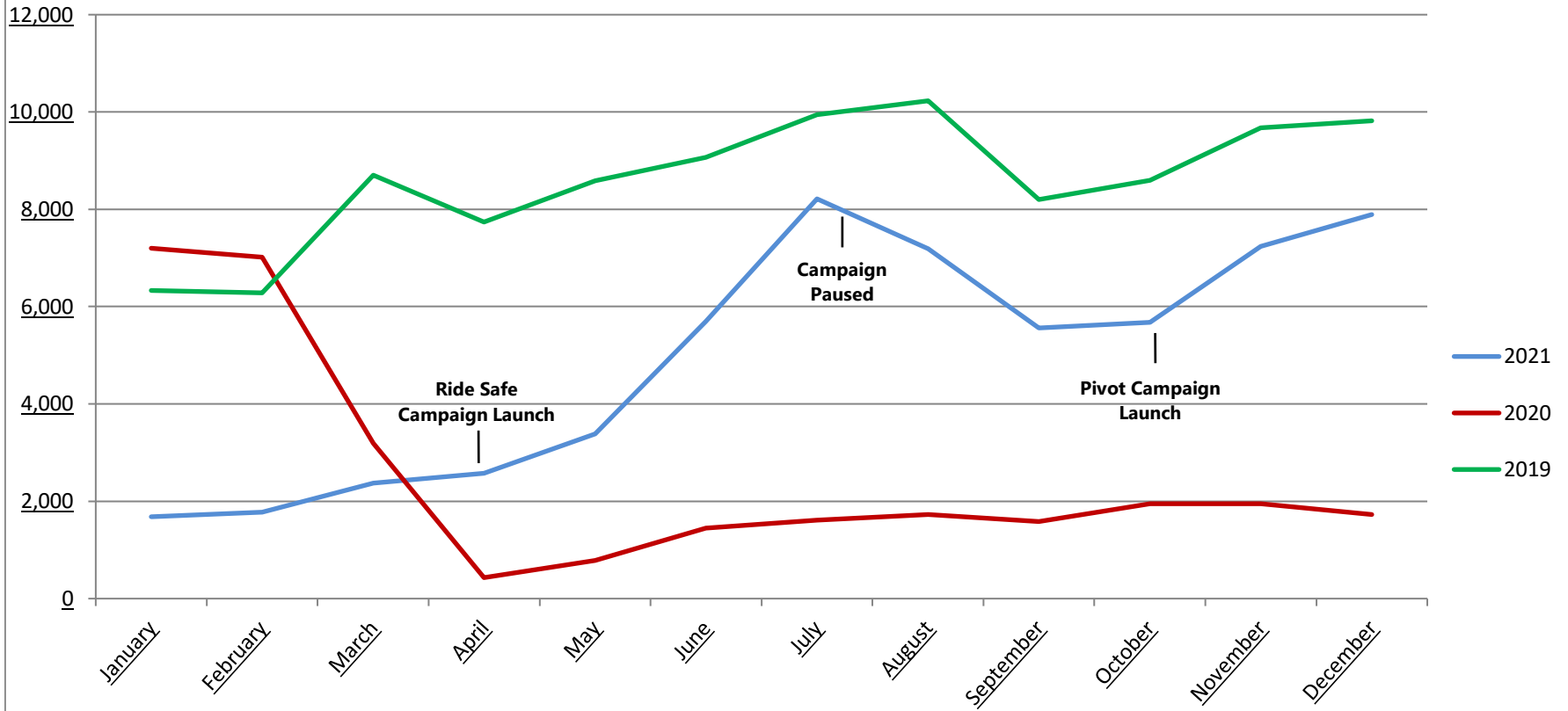
### **Next Quarter**

Four daily buses in each direction are available for those traveling between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. Amtrak Cascades trains will resume service between the two cities (and stations in between) as soon as both countries and Amtrak have COVID protocols in place for train passengers.

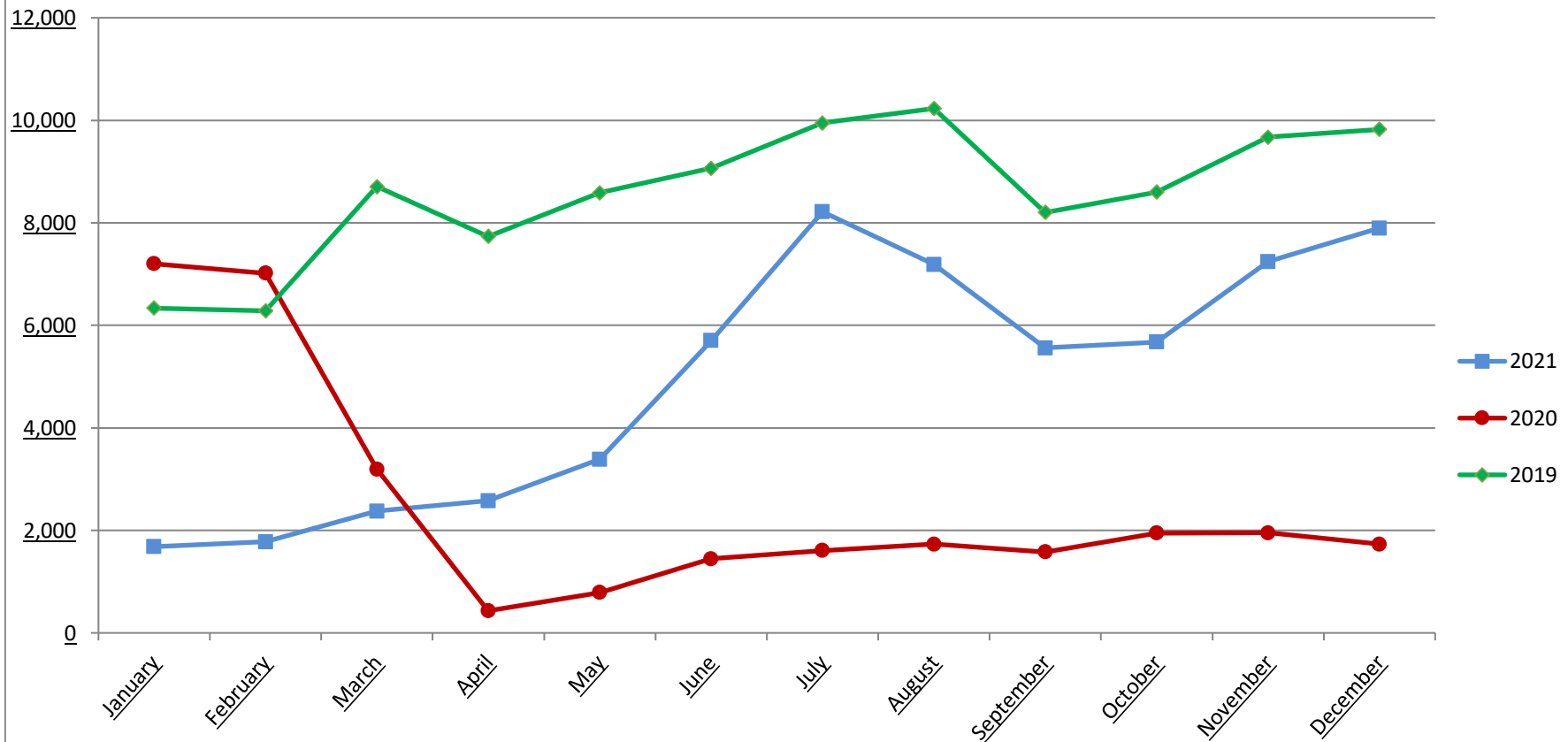
ODOT is developing the first Oregon State Rail Plan (OSRP) Implementation Plan. The purpose of this plan is to use the policies and priorities articulated in the OSRP to develop a rail needs inventory that enables staff to quickly prioritize projects depending on funding criteria. The plan will include strategies for making the improvements identified in the plan as well as funding options. It will help ODOT to better evaluate whether to support funding projects that are proposed for limited state and federal funds. The plan is being developed with input from the Rail Advisory Committee (RAC), technical advisory committee, rail and related industry stakeholders and the public. The plan is scheduled to be completed by summer 2022.

Applications for the new round of Connect Oregon funding closed at the end of October 2021. Twenty-one rail projects will be reviewed and ranked by the RAC in mid-February. Other ODOT committees and groups will evaluate and score the proposals before going to a Final Review Committee for disposition.

# Amtrak Cascades Marketing Campaign



## Amtrak Cascades Ridership in the Eugene – Portland Corridor Trains Operated Under Contract for the Oregon Department of Transportation



### Oct to Dec 2021

October to December 2021 ridership increased year-over-year as compared to the same period in 2020. Ridership peaked in July 2021, but began dropping in August and September, but began increasing again in October 2021 with a steady increase through December. Ridership nearly reached pre-pandemic numbers in December.

### Jul to Sept 2021

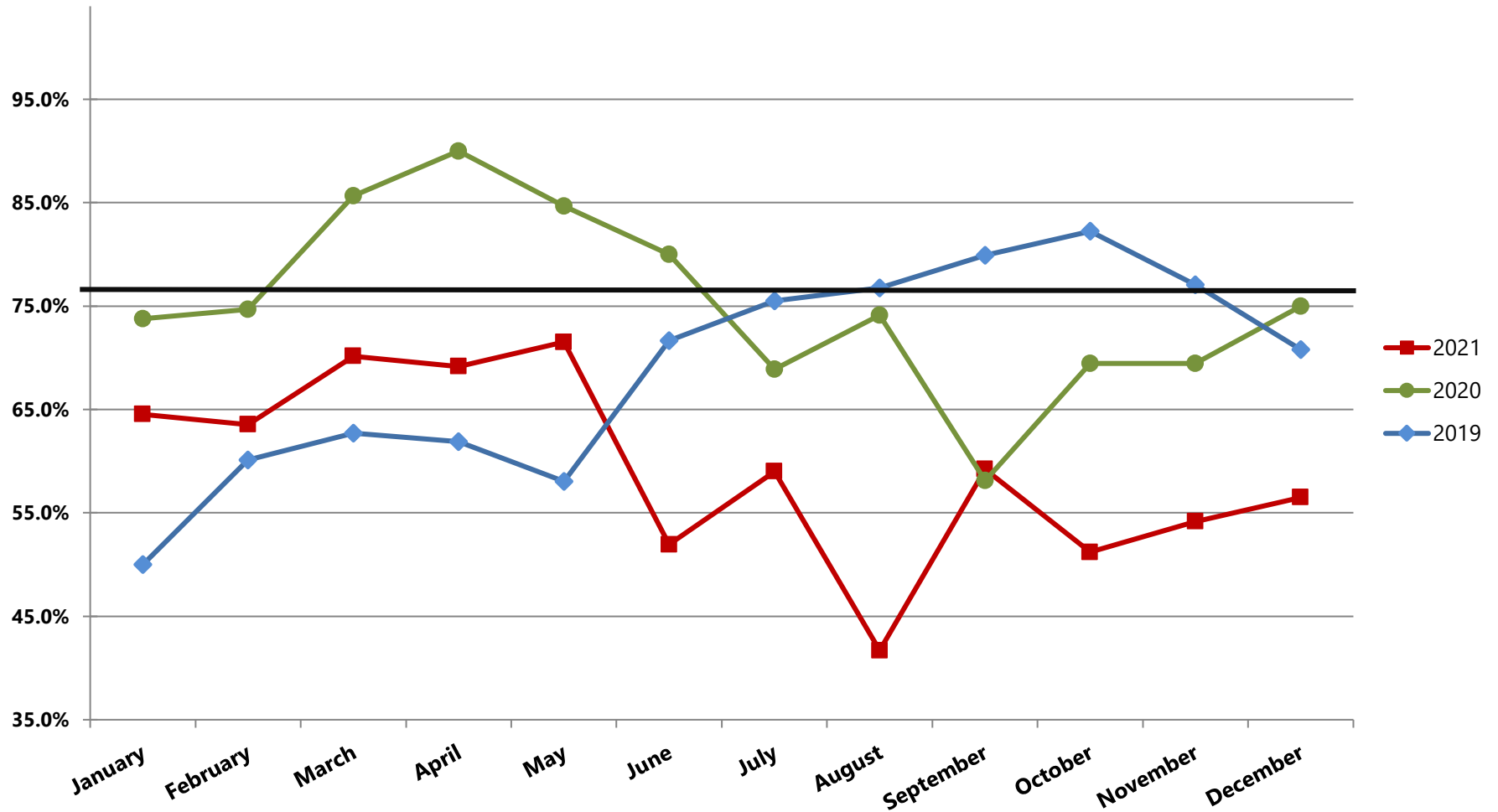
Ridership increased year-over-year as compared to the same period in 2020. Ridership in 2021 has increased and continued to increase month-over-month through July. Ridership peaked in July 2021, and in August and September 2021 ridership has dropped due to a surge of the COVID-19 Delta variant.

# Amtrak Cascades Ridership in the Eugene-Portland Corridor

TRAINS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT FOR THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR				
<b>500</b>	<b>2021</b>	714	839	1106	1159	1267	1305	1857	1727	1423	1289	1501	1605	15792				
<b>508</b>						287	1250	1948	1602	1337	1399	1967	2179	11969				
Northbound Trains		714	839	1106	1159	1554	2555	3805	3329	2760	2688	3468	3784	27761				
<b>503</b>						304	1682	2261	1929	1423	1485	1911	2349	13344				
<b>505</b>						968	938	1268	1420	1530	1462	2149	1931	1377	1500	1862	1761	18166
Southbound Trains		968	938	1268	1420	1834	3144	4410	3860	2800	2985	3773	4110	31510				
<b>All</b>			<b>1682</b>	<b>1777</b>	<b>2374</b>	<b>2579</b>	<b>3388</b>	<b>5699</b>	<b>8215</b>	<b>7189</b>	<b>5560</b>	<b>5673</b>	<b>7241</b>	<b>7894</b>	<b>59271</b>			
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR				
<b>500</b>	<b>2020</b>	1357	1359	606	194	328	615	737	812	730	853	854	765	9210				
<b>506</b>		832	871	297										2000				
<b>508</b>		1557	1597	760										3914				
Northbound Trains		3746	3827	1663	194	328	615	737	812	730	853	854	765	15124				
<b>511 (M-F)</b>		474	464	228										1166				
<b>513 (S-S-H)</b>		445	438	131										1014				
<b>505</b>		2535	2286	1172	237	460	833	871	920	851	1095	1099	966	13325				
Southbound Trains		3454	3188	1531	237	460	833	871	920	851	1095	1099	966	15505				
<b>All</b>			<b>7200</b>	<b>7015</b>	<b>3194</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>1448</b>	<b>1608</b>	<b>1732</b>	<b>1581</b>	<b>1948</b>	<b>1953</b>	<b>1731</b>	<b>30629</b>			
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR				
<b>500</b>	<b>2019</b>	1,528	1,307	1,749	1,682	1,779	1,812	1,986	2,156	1,656	1,817	1,418	1,780	20,670				
<b>506</b>		441	645	978	731	840	1,070	974	1,089	929	823	1,571	1,231	11,322				
<b>508</b>		1,329	1,435	1,981	1,814	2,015	1,930	2,153	2,182	1,718	2,099	2,261	2,233	23,150				
Northbound Trains		3,298	3,387	4,708	4,227	4,634	4,812	5,113	5,427	4,303	4,739	5,250	5,244	55,142				
<b>511 (M-F)</b>		395	392	561	558	568	675	789	760	572	744	586	730	7,330				
<b>513 (S-S-H)</b>		260	334	545	352	397	536	486	513	435	367	802	696	5,723				
<b>505</b>		2,383	2,170	2,892	2,598	2,987	3,043	3,559	3,530	2,893	2,750	3,033	3,152	34,990				
Southbound Trains		3,038	2,896	3,998	3,508	3,952	4,254	4,834	4,803	3,900	3,861	4,421	4,578	48,043				
<b>All</b>			<b>6,336</b>	<b>6,283</b>	<b>8,706</b>	<b>7,735</b>	<b>8,586</b>	<b>9,066</b>	<b>9,947</b>	<b>10,230</b>	<b>8,203</b>	<b>8,600</b>	<b>9,671</b>	<b>9,822</b>	<b>103,185</b>			

## Amtrak Cascades On-Time Performance in the Eugene-Portland Corridor Trains Operated Under Contract for the Oregon Department of Transportation



ODOT's contract with Amtrak states Amtrak will strive to achieve an OTP of 80% on a quarterly basis. The southbound evening train out of Portland (coming from Seattle) is considered on-time if it arrives within 15 minutes of its scheduled time. All other Amtrak Cascades trains are considered on-time if they arrive within 10 minutes of their scheduled arrival.

# Amtrak Cascades On-Time Performance in the Eugene-Portland Corridor

TRAINS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT FOR THE OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
<b>500</b>	<b>2</b>	84.6%	83.3%	80.6%	90.0%	91.4%	84.5%	91.7%	86.7%	96.4%	83.9%	81.7%	77.4%	86.0%
<b>508</b>						64.3%	50.0%	77.4%	50.9%	63.3%	61.3%	55.0%	61.3%	60.2%
Northbound Trains	<b>0</b>	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>84.4%</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>79.3%</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>68.3%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>76.1%</b>
<b>503</b>	<b>2</b>					50.0%	27.1%	38.7%	8.6%	35.0%	19.4%	41.7%	33.9%	30.0%
<b>505</b>			46.6%	43.8%	59.7%	48.3%	58.6%	46.4%	28.3%	20.0%	43.9%	40.3%	38.3%	53.3%
Southbound Trains	<b>1</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>48.3%</b>	<b>56.9%</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>33.6%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>39.3%</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>43.4%</b>	<b>38.6%</b>
<b>All</b>		<b>64.5%</b>	<b>63.5%</b>	<b>70.2%</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>71.5%</b>	<b>51.9%</b>	<b>59.0%</b>	<b>41.7%</b>	<b>59.2%</b>	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>54.2%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
<b>500</b>	<b>2</b>	88.1%	86.8%	92.0%	90.0%	88.7%	86.7%	94.8%	94.8%	76.7%	88.9%	88.9%	87.1%	88.6%
<b>506</b>			95.0%	94.4%	100.0%									
<b>508</b>	<b>0</b>	75.0%	77.6%	85.0%										78.5%
Northbound Trains		<b>0</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>88.7%</b>	<b>86.7%</b>	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>87.1%</b>
<b>511</b>	<b>2</b>	85.7%	71.1%	86.7%										80.9%
<b>513</b>			88.9%	90.0%	100.0%									
<b>505</b>	<b>0</b>	43.5%	54.4%	75.8%	90.0%	80.6%	73.3%	44.3%	53.4%	38.6%	50.0%	50.0%	62.9%	61.2%
Southbound Trains		<b>0</b>	<b>64.8%</b>	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>81.4%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>73.3%</b>	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>38.6%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>62.9%</b>
<b>All</b>		<b>73.8%</b>	<b>74.7%</b>	<b>85.6%</b>	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>84.7%</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>68.9%</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>58.1%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>75.0%</b>	<b>76.4%</b>
TRAIN		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
<b>500</b>	<b>2</b>	68.2%	75.0%	70.7%	75.0%	61.9%	95.0%	93.2%	97.7%	88.9%	90.5%	94.1%	85.4%	82.8%
<b>506</b>			100.0%	91.7%	70.0%	78.6%	94.4%	95.0%	93.8%	93.8%	95.0%	87.5%	87.5%	90.0%
<b>508</b>	<b>0</b>	63.9%	72.5%	73.3%	66.7%	66.7%	70.0%	81.4%	83.9%	89.3%	90.3%	79.3%	71.7%	76.3%
Northbound Trains		<b>0</b>	<b>70.0%</b>	<b>76.1%</b>	<b>71.9%</b>	<b>71.3%</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>82.5%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>90.2%</b>	<b>90.2%</b>	<b>95.7%</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>79.3%</b>
<b>511</b>	<b>1</b>	60.0%	73.9%	76.2%	63.6%	68.4%	90.0%	84.1%	93.2%	91.7%	100.0%	88.2%	77.5%	81.4%
<b>513</b>			90.0%	75.0%	75.0%	64.3%	77.8%	80.0%	93.8%	94.4%	100.0%	53.2%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>505</b>	<b>9</b>	11.3%	22.0%	31.1%	41.4%	23.3%	35.0%	39.7%	29.8%	44.6%	53.2%	45.8%	40.3%	34.9%
Southbound Trains		<b>9</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>53.7%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>63.6%</b>	<b>63.0%</b>	<b>69.6%</b>	<b>74.6%</b>	<b>68.7%</b>	<b>62.3%</b>
<b>All</b>		<b>50.0%</b>	<b>60.1%</b>	<b>62.7%</b>	<b>61.9%</b>	<b>58.1%</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>75.5%</b>	<b>76.8%</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>77.1%</b>	<b>70.8%</b>	<b>69.5%</b>