



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Bureau of Transportation Statistics  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.bts.gov](http://www.bts.gov)  
**BTS DATA**

BTS 07-04  
Tuesday April 6, 2004

Contact: Dave Smallen  
Tel.: 202-366-5568

---

### **BTS Releases January Transportation Services Index (TSI) Combined Index and Passenger Index Reach Record Highs**

The Transportation Services Index (TSI) reached the highest level in the 14-year period covered by the index with a 0.8 percent rise in January, the Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported today.

The increase was the fifth consecutive monthly increase following a July to August decrease. The January level of 121.4 (1996=100) was 4.9 percent higher than in January 2003.

The Passenger Transportation Services Index also reached an all-time peak of 125.1, which was 2.5 percent higher than the previous high in November 2000.

TSI is a single seasonally adjusted index of the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire transportation industries, including railroad, air, truck, inland waterways, pipeline, and local transit.

The index includes historic data from 1990 to the present, allowing for examination of trends, peaks and low-points. Changes are measured against the base year of 1996. The TSI is still under development and is considered experimental.

### **The Transportation Services Index for Freight**

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the TSI for freight decreased 0.9 percent in January falling from a record high of 120.9. However, the January 2004 level of 119.8 was 2.3 percent higher than the January 2003 level of 117.1.

- more -

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE  
ADD ONE**

**Transportation Services Index for Passengers**

The TSI for passengers was up 4.9 percent in January, rising after the first decrease in seven months took place in December. The increase was the largest month-to-month rise since December 2002. The January level of 125.1 is 11.5 percent higher than the January 2003 level of 112.2 and exceeds the previous peak of 122.1 in November 2000.

**Table 1: Percent changes in the Transportation Services Index by Month Since July 2003 (Seasonally Adjusted):**

	TSI		Freight		Passenger	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
<b>July</b>	115.5	1.8	116.7	1.0	112.5	3.8
<b>August</b>	114.3	-1.0	114.8	-1.6	113.1	0.5
<b>September</b>	114.9	0.5	115.1	0.2	114.4	1.2
<b>October</b>	116.5	1.4	116.6	1.3	116.3	1.7
<b>November</b>	117.6	0.9	116.5	-0.1	120.2	3.3
<b>December</b>	120.4	2.4	120.9	3.7	119.3	-0.8
<b>January</b>	121.4	0.8	119.8	-0.9	125.1	4.9

**Table 2: Percent changes in the Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year January TSI (1996 = 100)**

	TSI	Percent change from previous year
<b>1996</b>	96.0	-5.7
<b>1997</b>	102.8	7.2
<b>1998</b>	109.5	6.4
<b>1999</b>	112.6	2.9
<b>2000</b>	117.0	3.9
<b>2001</b>	114.7	-1.9
<b>2002</b>	109.8	-4.3
<b>2003</b>	115.6	5.3
<b>2004</b>	121.4	4.9

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE  
ADD TWO**

**Table 3: Percent Changes in the Transportation Services Index from Previous Years to 2003 January to January**

<b>Percent change to January 2004</b>	<b>Since January ...</b>	<b>Duration</b>
4.9	2003	One Year
10.5	2002	Two Years
5.8	2001	Three Years
3.7	2000	Four Years
7.8	1999	Five Years
10.9	1998	Six Years
18.0	1997	Seven Years
26.5	1996	Eight Years

**Table 4: Percent changes in the Freight Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year**

**January Freight TSI (1996 = 100)**

	<b>Freight TSI</b>	<b>Percent change from previous year</b>
<b>1996</b>	96.2	-8.4
<b>1997</b>	102.3	6.4
<b>1998</b>	111.0	8.5
<b>1999</b>	113.5	2.2
<b>2000</b>	119.0	4.9
<b>2001</b>	112.8	-5.2
<b>2002</b>	111.2	-1.4
<b>2003</b>	117.1	5.3
<b>2004</b>	119.8	2.3

**Table 5: Percent changes in the Passenger Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year**

**January Passenger TSI (1996 = 100)**

	<b>Passenger TSI</b>	<b>Percent change from previous year</b>
<b>1996</b>	95.5	0.8
<b>1997</b>	103.9	8.9
<b>1998</b>	106.3	2.3
<b>1999</b>	110.8	4.2
<b>2000</b>	112.9	1.9
<b>2001</b>	119.3	5.7
<b>2002</b>	106.5	-10.8
<b>2003</b>	112.2	5.4
<b>2004</b>	125.1	11.5

**- more -**

## **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE ADD THREE**

During the six months ending in January, the TSI rose 5.1 percent (seasonally adjusted). The Freight TSI rose 2.6 percent and the Passenger TSI rose 11.2 percent during the six-month period.

### **Brief Explanation of the TSI**

The Transportation Services Index (TSI) is a measure of the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire transportation industries, which include railroad, air, truck, and inland waterways transportation, pipeline transportation, and local transit.

The TSI tells us how the output of transportation services has increased or decreased from month to month. The index can be examined together with other economic indicators to produce a better understanding of the current and future course of the economy. The movement of the index over time can be compared with other economic measures to understand the relationship of changes in transportation output to changes in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The original research that produced the TSI was conducted by Professor of Economics Kajal Lahiri of the State University of New York at Albany and George Washington University's Professor of Economics Herman Stekler along with graduate assistant Vincent Yao under a BTS research grant. For a summary of the research, see "Monthly Output for the U.S. Transportation Sector," a forthcoming article from the *Journal of Transportation and Statistics*, Vol. 6, No. 2/3, which can be found at [http://www.bts.gov/programs/transportation\\_services\\_index/tsi\\_related\\_research/html/paper\\_01/](http://www.bts.gov/programs/transportation_services_index/tsi_related_research/html/paper_01/)

The TSI is still under development and is therefore considered experimental. It is being examined for refinements in data sources, methodologies and interpretations.

The freight transportation index consists of:

For hire trucking (including parcel services),

Railroad freight services (including rail based intermodal shipments such as containers on flat cars),

Inland waterways transportation,

Pipeline transportation (including principally petroleum and petroleum products and natural gas), and

Air freight.

The index does not include international or coastal waterborne movements, private trucking, courier services, or the US Postal Service.

The passenger transportation index consists of:

Local mass transit,

Intercity passenger rail, and

Passenger air transportation.

**- more -**

**TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE  
ADD FOUR**

The index does not include intercity bus, sight seeing services, ferry services, taxi service, private automobile usage, or bicycling and other non-motorized means of transportation.

The components have been selected to give the best coverage possible of the for-hire transportation industry, subject to current limitations on the availability of monthly data.

**- END -**