

FEDERAL

RAILROAD

ADMINISTRATION

# Strategic Plan

2000-2003



# **FRA**

## **Who We Are and What We Do**

**The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) was created in 1966 to promote and enforce safety throughout the U.S. railroad system, rehabilitate the Northeast Corridor rail passenger services, consolidate Federal support for rail transportation, and support research and development for rail transportation. Today, the FRA is one of eleven agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation concerned with intermodal transportation, as well as the timely and effective implementation of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), technological advancement, the use of national resources, and the well being of our communities.**

**The FRA is a proactive organization, committed to working as a partner with everyone associated with the U.S. railroad industry – large and small railroads, passengers, shippers, employees and their unions, rail management, manufacturers, suppliers, Congress, State and local governments, industry and advocacy organizations, and the general public. This open and participatory environment has better enabled us to make progress and define solutions where problems exist. Through inclusive efforts, the FRA helps achieve many national goals.**

**The FRA is also committed to working with our Department of Transportation (DOT) partners and to supporting the Department's strategic goals. The FRA's goals of safety, mobility, economic growth, security, human and natural environment, and organizational excellence incorporate the Departmental goals as they relate to rail transportation and reflect our commitment**

to maintaining an organization focused on quality and outstanding service to both our internal and external customers. Our goals also exhibit the FRA's support for the DOT emphasis on the ONE DOT concept. Through these goals, we are truly aligned with our DOT partners to achieve a transportation system that is international, intermodal, intelligent, and inclusive.

The FRA remains steadfast in our concern for and commitment to ever safer and more secure rail transportation for passengers, railroad employees, and the public. We will achieve improved safety through advocacy, public education, and regulation. The pursuit of safety also demands vigorous public outreach that will, for example, make more people aware of the danger of highway/rail crossings and of trespassing on railroad rights-of-way. Saving lives through improved safety is an important and achievable goal.

The FRA is poised to support the United States in the 21st century. We want to advance technology so that transportation is safer, faster, more efficient, environmentally sound, and more reliable. A dynamic future must be built on a strong economy. Vibrant rail transportation systems will be as important to our future as they were to our past.

## VISION ---

*To advance rail transportation  
through organizational excellence,  
integrity, and professionalism.*

## MISSION ---

*Ensure that our Nation has safe,  
secure, and efficient rail  
transportation that enhances the  
quality of life for all.*

# **FRA STRATEGIC GOALS**

## ***SAFETY***

Promote safety by working toward the elimination of rail-related fatalities, injuries, and incidents.

---

## ***MOBILITY***

Promote an accessible, reliable rail transportation system that meets the needs of freight customers and rail passengers.

---

## ***ECONOMIC GROWTH***

Support a rail transportation system that sustains America's economic growth.

---

## ***SECURITY***

Support the secure movement of people and goods on the Nation's rail transportation network.

---

## ***HUMAN AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT***

Protect and enhance communities and the natural environment affected by rail transportation.

---

## ***ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE***

Promote FRA's ability to achieve program results.

---

## **SAFETY—**

*Promote safety by working toward the elimination of rail-related fatalities, injuries, and incidents.*

### **Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Reduce the rail-related fatalities rate by 20 percent from 1998 through 2003.
- ▶ Reduce the rail-related injuries rate by 23 percent from 1998 through 2003.
- ▶ Reduce the train accident rate by 14 percent from 1998 through 2003.
- ▶ Reduce the grade crossing accident rate by 30 percent from 1998 through 2003.
- ▶ Reduce the rail hazardous-materials-released rate by 21 percent from 1998 through 2003.

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Enhance the Safety Assurance and Compliance Program by ensuring that rail labor, management, and FRA use the partnership approach to identify and resolve safety-related concerns.
- ▶ Continue to improve the quality, cost-effectiveness, and acceptance of Federal railroad safety regulations by using the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee to develop regulatory recommendations reflecting a reasoned consensus among the industry groups most directly involved in safety.

- ▶ **Focus enforcement of Federal railroad safety laws on those regulatory violations that are among the primary causes of accidents, incidents, and hazardous materials releases.**
- ▶ **Promote anti-fatigue strategies to ensure that railroad employees remain healthy and alert on the job.**
- ▶ **Develop and promote highway-rail grade crossing safety and trespass prevention programs and initiatives.**
- ▶ **Make highway-rail-crossing computer files available on the Internet for use by States and local governments.**
- ▶ **Conduct public outreach programs that will focus on those States and localities reporting the most grade crossing and trespasser fatalities.**
- ▶ **Implement a Hazardous Material Incident Reduction Program that builds relationships with the transportation, shipping, and supply industries and sustains measurable results through improvements in packaging design, maintenance, operational change, knowledge sharing, and compliance audits.**
- ▶ **Forge partnerships with Federal, State, and local communities to exchange information and address concerns of transporting highly radioactive material.**
- ▶ **Encourage the continued development of a safety culture within the railroad industry based on mutual respect and trust among all stakeholders.**
- ▶ **Conduct research and development to support rail safety rulemaking and safety assurance.**
- ▶ **Develop and demonstrate a model Positive Train Control (PTC) system and work with the industry to develop standards for interoperable PTC which can be implemented economically.**

## **MOBILITY—**

*Promote an accessible, reliable rail transportation system that meets the needs of freight customers and rail passengers.*

### **Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ **Improve the infrastructure and operational efficiency of freight and intercity rail passenger transportation systems.**
- ▶ **Optimize public/private investment in rail-related development to improve productivity, stimulate economic development, and enhance the environment.**
- ▶ **Develop and maintain measures and responses to service disruptions to ensure the expeditious recovery of affected rail systems.**
- ▶ **Facilitate movement between transportation modes.**
- ▶ **Integrate transportation activities with environmental and community concerns. Promote international and intermodal connections to the rail system.**

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ **Promote railroads and intermodal rail connections as important components of our national transportation system.**
- ▶ **Provide planning assistance to States and localities for rail projects and encourage the consideration of rail improvements in state and local transportation plans.**



- ▶ **Promote, support, and encourage the implementation of high speed rail systems.**
- ▶ **Conduct research, development, and demonstration of technologies that enhance the feasibility of high speed rail applications in the U.S.**
- ▶ **Implement the Maglev Deployment Program, with a goal of demonstrating a high speed maglev system in revenue service in the U.S.**
- ▶ **Complete implementation of Nationwide Differential Global Positioning System (NDGPS).**
- ▶ **Support the improvement of rail passenger service by providing financial assistance for capital improvement.**
- ▶ **Support Amtrak's efforts to become independent of Federal operating assistance.**
- ▶ **Integrate into State and local planning activities consideration of rail as a viable option.**
- ▶ **Promote an efficient, economically sound, competitive, and secure passenger and freight rail system as an important component of a national transportation system.**
- ▶ **Continue to facilitate improved railroad labor-management relations.**

## ECONOMIC GROWTH—

*Support a rail transportation system that sustains America's economic growth.*

### **Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ **Promote a healthy rail freight system that ensures shippers receive reliable, on-time performance, at competitive rates.**
- ▶ **Help ensure the economic vitality of the freight railroad industry.**
- ▶ **Increase the rail system's capacity and efficiency.**
- ▶ **Spur regional development through enhanced rail access.**

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ **Enable the application of new technology and electronic commerce.**
- ▶ **Conduct policy research and analysis leading to the improvement of the economic efficiency of the rail system.**
- ▶ **Conduct research and development that could lead to improvement in rail industry efficiency, particularly when done in conjunction with work which has safety benefits.**
- ▶ **Manage the RRIF program by giving priority lending to rail projects with significant public benefits which promote regional economic development, meet the repayability requirements, and otherwise might not be implemented.**
- ▶ **Actively participate in the STB's proceeding to rewrite the standards and regulations governing rail mergers.**

- ▶ **Partner with States and communities to promote rail service for both freight shippers and passengers.**
- ▶ **Support studies of rail economic issues and actively participate in the development of regulatory and legislative policies that impact the long term financial stability of the rail industry.**
- ▶ **Examine carefully any proposals for future rail mergers, including the downstream effects a rail industry with two or three transcontinental railroads.**

## SECURITY—

*Support the secure movement of people and goods on the Nation's rail transportation network.*

### **Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's rail transportation network to crime and terrorism.
- ▶ Support the ability of the Nation's railroads to meet national defense needs.

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Help identify threats and vulnerabilities to the Nation's critical rail transportation system, establish an information-sharing process, and work with the private sector and other Federal, State, and local agencies to develop effective countermeasures.
- ▶ Continue to promote the implementation of Presidential Decision Directive 63, which is aimed at protecting the transportation infrastructure against acts of terrorism.
- ▶ Lead the departmental initiative to address the issues and exchange information on the transportation of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel by all modes of transportation.

## HUMAN AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT—

*Protect and enhance communities and the natural environment affected by rail transportation.*

### **Outcome Goal:**

- ▶ Ensure that no FRA-funded project is harmful to the environment.
- ▶ Improve the environmental impact of railroad operations on communities.

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Prepare environmental assessments and, where required, Environmental Impact Statements for any rail project or activity that constitutes a major Federal action with impact on the environment.
- ▶ Incorporate environmentally sensitive and environmental justice criteria in the design and location of FRA-sponsored projects.
- ▶ Incorporate environmentally sensitive standards in FRA safety regulations and contribute to the development of environmental regulations affecting railroads.
- ▶ Conduct research on the use of alternative fuels and other energy conservation and environmental quality improvement actions related to railroads.
- ▶ Promote architectural excellence in FRA sponsored designs.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE—**

*Promote FRA's ability to achieve program results. This goal underlies the accomplishment of the other five strategic goals.*

**HUMAN RESOURCES OBJECTIVE:** Foster a diverse, highly talented workforce capable of achieving FRA's strategic goals.

### **Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Continue to invest in human capital by providing appropriate personnel programs, activities, and training to enable employees to reach their full potential.
- ▶ Make workforce planning an integral and continuous feature in HR management.
- ▶ Improve employee satisfaction, confidence, and morale.
- ▶ Create an atmosphere in which all employees are encouraged to participate in the decision-making process and share accountability.
- ▶ Develop incentives that will encourage employees to achieve results.

### **To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Support diversity under the Department's Managing Diversity Order.
- ▶ Ensure a continuous learning environment by implementing policies and providing resources and opportunities that enable all FRA employees to achieve their goals.

- ▶ Support Section 508 and ensure all FRA IT systems are accessible to all employees with disabilities.
- ▶ Continue to support an active partnership between FRA and AFGE Local 2814.

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OBJECTIVE:** Institute policies and procedures to identify and respond to the requirements, expectations, and preferences of our employees and customers.

**Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Continually emphasize the importance of good customer service to all customers.
- ▶ Create an environment which will encourage continuous customer feedback.
- ▶ Ensure customers have access to accurate and timely information and/or assistance.

**To achieve our goals, FRA, will:**

- ▶ Ensure a continuous learning environment by implementing policies and providing resources and opportunities that enable all FRA employees to achieve their goals.
- ▶ Improve communication tools such as the Internet, Intranet, and electronic messaging to improve information exchange between FRA and customers.

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE:** Provide an information system that improves mission performance, data sharing, system integrity, communication, and productivity.

**Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Enable FRA employees by providing the technology needed perform their jobs.
- ▶ Ensure that existing and new information systems are compatible, secure, and reliable.
- ▶ Provide increased access to the latest technology and information.
- ▶ Ensure IT systems are secure from unauthorized and inappropriate access, disruption, or destruction.
- ▶ Cultivate an environment of full and open communication top down, bottom up, and laterally.

**To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Manage a program to ensure the protection of FRA-owned and operated IT systems and the security of our rail transportation information systems.
- ▶ Continue to improve information exchange between the agency and the customer via Internet, Intranet, and electronic messaging.
- ▶ Manage and control IT capital investment portfolios through a structured and integrated capital programming process.

**BUSINESS PROCESSES OBJECTIVE:** Effectively acquire and manage FRA facilities, equipment, and services to accomplish the strategic goals.

**Outcome Goals:**

- ▶ Provide the agency and the public with high quality services through improved business processes.



- ▶ Support good working relationships between FRA employees and our customers.
- ▶ Meet the highest Federal standards for FRA facilities in terms of accessibility, safety, security systems, technology, and maintenance.

**To achieve our goals, FRA will:**

- ▶ Support the DOT assessment and implementation of Electronic Commerce Initiatives.
- ▶ Expand and improve the electronic delivery of FRA services and information to the employees and customers.
- ▶ Provide best value products and services to FRA employees and customers.
- ▶ Focus on Performance Based Service Contracting (PBSC) techniques to meet PBSC criteria.

*For additional information,  
contact the FRA's Office of Public Affairs  
Telephone (202) 493-6024.*