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AMERICAN
ECONOMY**

**U.S. Department of Transportation
Research and Innovative Technology
Administration
Bureau of Transportation Statistics
Washington, D.C.
www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm**

BTS Data

BTS 2-09
Wednesday, January 14, 2009

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Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Fell 1.4 Percent in November from October

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) fell 1.4 percent in November from its October level, falling after a one-month rise, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1).

The November decline was the third monthly decrease in four months (Table 2).

At 107.6 in November, the freight TSI is at its lowest level since January 2004 when it was 106.5 and is down 4.9 percent from its historic peak of 113.1 reached in November 2005. For additional historical data, go to <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>.

For the first 11 months of 2008, the index fell 0.7 percent. The index rose 1.3 percent in the first 11 months of 2007 before dropping in December to finish the year down by 0.1 percent (Table 3).

The freight TSI measures the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire freight transportation industries. The index consists of data from for-hire trucking, rail, inland waterways, pipelines and air freight.

The November 2008 freight TSI level was 2.4 percent lower than the November 2007 level of 110.2. The freight index is at its lowest November level since 2003 (Table 4).

Despite a 4.9 percent decline from its historic peak in November 2005, the freight index has increased 2.2 percent in five years and 6.8 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE ADD ONE

The TSI is a seasonally adjusted index that measures changes from the monthly average of the base year of 2000. It includes historic data from 1990 to the present. Release of the December index is scheduled for Feb. 11.

BTS has issued a new technical report explaining the TSI. *BTS Technical Report: Transportation Services Index and the Economy* is available for download at <https://www.bts.gov/pdc/index.xml> in the BTS bookstore.

Transportation Services Index for Passengers

The TSI for passengers fell 0.2 percent in November from its October level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI November 2008 level of 114.0 was 2.1 percent lower than the November 2007 level, marking the first year-to-year decrease since November 2001 (Table 7). The index declined 2.8 percent during the first 11 months (Table 3). Despite the decline in the first 11 months of the year, the passenger index is up 14.2 percent in five years and 22.2 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

The passenger TSI measures the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire passenger transportation industries. The seasonally adjusted index consists of data from air, local transit and intercity rail.

Combined Freight and Passenger Index

The combined freight and passenger TSI fell 1.1 percent in November from its October level (Table 8). The combined TSI November 2008 level of 108.8 was 2.3 percent lower than the November 2007 level (Table 9). The combined index fell 1.2 percent for the first 11 months of the year (Table 3). However, the combined index is up 5.0 percent in five years and 10.7 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

The combined TSI merges the freight and passenger indexes into a single index.

More on TSI

Note: TSI numbers for July (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The July Freight TSI is 111.3, revised from the 112.9 reported in last month (December) release. The July Passenger TSI is 118.3, revised from 116.3. The July Combined TSI is 112.6, revised from 113.4. The TSI for August, September, October and November are preliminary.

TSI revision policy: TSI is updated monthly with the latest four months' index numbers considered preliminary. Each month BTS releases the latest preliminary TSI, and replaces the oldest preliminary TSI with a revised TSI. More information about the monthly revision policy, the comprehensive revision conducted in July 2007 and the TSI index is available at <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD TWO

Table 1: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes since May 2008

Percent Change by Month
(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
May	109.9	0.4	118.4	0.1	111.6	0.3
June	109.8	-0.2	118.3	-0.1	111.5	-0.1
July ^R	111.3	1.4	118.3	0.0	112.6	1.0
August ^P	110.8	-0.4	116.8	-1.3	111.9	-0.6
September ^P	108.0	-2.5	114.9	-1.6	109.4	-2.3
October ^P	109.1	1.0	114.3	-0.6	110.1	0.6
November^P	107.6	-1.4	114.0	-0.2	108.8	-1.1

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 2: Freight Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2005-2008
Percent change from previous month

	2005 % Growth	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth
January	1.7	0.4	-0.3	2.8
February	-0.9	-1.4	0.0	0.1
March	0.1	0.4	1.1	-2.9
April	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	1.1
May	0.0	2.4	-0.1	0.4
June	-0.4	-0.3	-0.7	-0.2
July	-0.5	-0.9	0.1	(R) 1.4
August	1.0	-2.5	0.5	(P) -0.4
September	-1.3	0.9	-0.9	(P) -2.5
October	-0.3	-0.1	1.7	(P) 1.0
November	2.8	-1.4	0.4	(P) -1.4
December	-1.7	0.6	-1.7	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD THREE

Table 3: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes Year-to-Date Change, 1999-2008

Percent change from December of previous year
December to November

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
1999	4.3	5.7	4.7
2000	-5.6	7.7	-1.6
2001	-0.2	-14.3	-4.7
2002	6.6	5.2	6.2
2003	0.7	2.2	1.1
2004	3.1	5.9	3.9
2005	1.9	3.2	2.3
2006	-2.7	3.8	-1.2
2007	1.3	2.0	1.4
2008^P	-0.7	-2.8	-1.2

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 4: Freight Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year

Percent change in the November Freight TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
1999	104.1	3.3
2000	99.1	-4.8
2001	97.6	-1.5
2002	103.7	6.2
2003	105.3	1.6
2004	111.4	5.8
2005	113.1	1.6
2006	108.3	-4.3
2007	110.2	1.8
2008^P	107.6	-2.4

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD FOUR

**Table 5: Transportation Services Indexes from Previous Years
Percent Change to 2008 (November to November)**

Since November . .	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to November 2008	Passenger TSI Percent change to November 2008	Combined TSI Percent change to November 2008
2007	1	-2.4	-2.1	-2.3
2006	2	-0.6	0.9	-0.2
2005	3	-4.9	3.8	-2.9
2004	4	-3.4	7.1	-0.9
2003	5	2.2	14.2	5.0
2002	6	3.8	18.7	7.4
2001	7	10.2	31.8	15.5
2000	8	8.6	11.1	8.6
1999	9	3.3	15.3	6.3
1998	10	6.8	22.2	10.7

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to November 2008 are all preliminary.

**Table 6: Passenger Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2005-2008
Percent change from previous month**

	2005 % Growth	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth
January	1.4	1.9	-0.1	-0.1
February	-0.1	-0.6	-2.0	-0.5
March	0.5	1.0	2.2	0.8
April	0.0	0.3	0.5	0.7
May	0.8	0.6	1.5	0.1
June	0.1	-1.0	-0.2	-0.1
July	0.1	0.5	-0.1	(R) 0.0
August	0.2	0.0	1.1	(P) -1.3
September	1.4	0.9	-0.1	(P) -1.6
October	-1.9	0.4	0.7	(P) -0.6
November	0.7	-0.2	-1.5	(P) -0.2
December	-0.9	1.1	0.7	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD FIVE

**Table 7: Passenger Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year
Percent change in the November Passenger TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
1999	98.8	6.0
2000	102.6	3.8
2001	86.5	-15.7
2002	96.0	11.0
2003	99.8	3.9
2004	106.4	6.6
2005	109.8	3.2
2006	113.0	2.9
2007	116.4	3.1
2008^P	114.0	-2.1

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

**Table 8: Combined Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2005-2008
Percent change from previous month**

	2005 % Growth	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth
January	1.6	0.8	-0.3	2.1
February	-0.7	-1.2	-0.5	-0.1
March	0.2	0.6	1.4	-2.0
April	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	1.0
May	0.2	2.0	0.3	0.3
June	-0.3	-0.4	-0.6	-0.1
July	-0.3	-0.6	0.0	(R) 1.0
August	0.8	-1.9	0.7	(P) -0.6
September	-0.6	0.9	-0.7	(P) -2.3
October	-0.7	0.1	1.4	(P) 0.6
November	2.3	-1.1	-0.1	(P) -1.1
December	-1.5	0.7	-1.1	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD SIX

**Table 9: Combined Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year
Percent change in the November TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
1999	102.4	4.1
2000	100.2	-2.1
2001	94.3	-6.0
2002	101.4	7.5
2003	103.6	2.3
2004	109.8	6.0
2005	112.0	2.0
2006	109.1	-2.6
2007	111.4	2.1
2008^P	108.8	-2.3

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE

ADD SEVEN

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.

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 freight transportation index consists of:

For-hire trucking,

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 transit,

Intercity passenger rail, and

Passenger air transportation.

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

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