



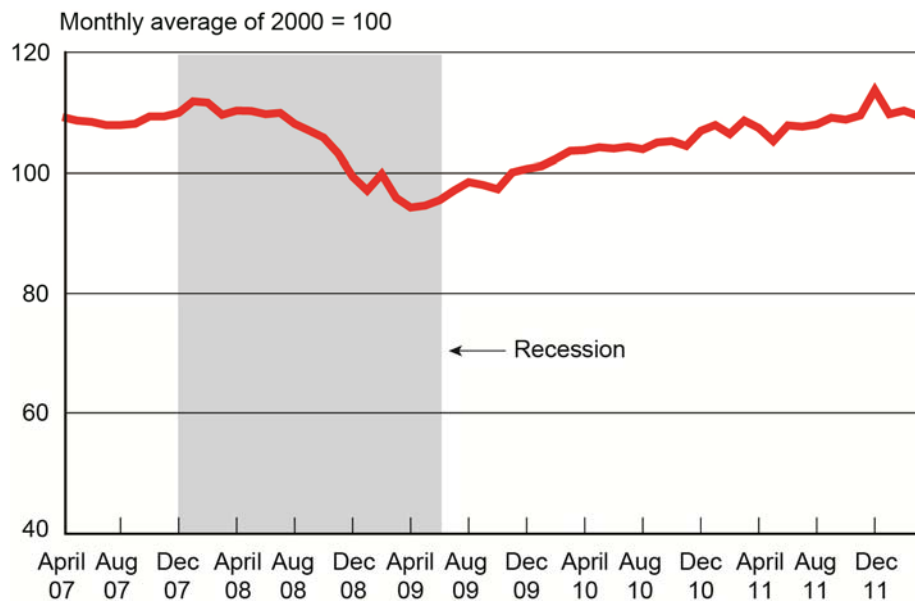
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BTS Data

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Contact: Dave Smallen
Tel: 202-366-5568

Freight Shipments Fell 0.8% in March from February

Five Years: Freight Transportation Services Index, April 2007-March 2012



The amount of freight carried by the for-hire transportation industry fell 0.8 percent in March from February, declining after a one-month increase, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (BTS) Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) released today. The March level was 16.0 percent above the April 2009 low during the recession (Tables 1, 2A).

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE

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BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reported that the level of freight shipments measured by the Freight TSI, 109.4, declined from December 2011's mark of 113.7 which was the all-time high since 1990 when BTS' TSI records began (Table 2A). See historical [TSI data](#).

The Freight TSI measures the month-to-month changes in freight shipments by mode of transportation in ton-miles, which are then combined into one index. The index measures the output of the for-hire freight transportation industry and consists of data from for-hire trucking, rail, inland waterways, pipelines and air freight.

Trend: Freight shipments in March 2012 (109.4) were at the fourth highest level since the early recession month of July 2008 despite the 3.8 percent decline from December 2011 (113.7 on the index), which was the highest level in the 22-year history of the series. After dipping to a recent low in April 2009 (94.3) during the recession, freight shipments increased in 23 of the last 35 months, rising 16.0 percent during that period (Tables 2, 2A). For additional historical data, go to <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>.

Index highs and lows: Freight shipments in March 2012 (109.4) rose 16.0 percent from the recent low in April 2009 during the recession (94.3). In April 2009, freight shipments were at their lowest level since June 1997 (92.3). The March 2012 level is down 3.8 percent from the historic freight shipment peak reached in December 2011 (113.7).

Long-term trend: Freight shipments are down 1.2 percent in the five years from pre-recession of March 2007 and up 10.9 percent in the 10 years from March 2002 despite declines in recent years (Table 5).

Same month of previous year: March 2012 freight shipments rose 0.8 percent from March 2011 and 14.1 percent from March 2009, during the recession, but remain below the level of March 2007 (110.8) (Tables 4, 5).

1st Quarter Changes: The Freight TSI fell 3.8 percent in the first quarter, the first quarterly decline after two consecutive increases. The index rose in nine of the last 11 quarters (Table 10).

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 April index is scheduled for June 13.

For a webinar on the TSI, see [Past Webinars](#). For a video explanation of the TSI, see [Overview of the Transportation Services Index](#). A BTS report explaining the TSI, [Transportation Services Index and the Economy](#), is available for download.

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Passenger Index: The TSI for passengers rose 0.5 percent in March from its February level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI March 2012 level of 116.7 was 2.1 percent above the March 2011 level (Table 7). The index is unchanged in five years and up 25.1 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

The passenger TSI measures the month-to-month changes in travel conducted in the for-hire passenger transportation sector. The seasonally adjusted index consists of data from air, local transit and intercity rail.

Combined Index: The combined freight and passenger TSI fell 0.4 percent in March from its February level (Table 8). The combined TSI March 2012 level of 111.3 was 1.1 percent above the March 2011 level (Table 9). The combined index is down 0.9 percent in five years and up 14.8 percent in 10 years despite recent declines (Table 5). The combined TSI merges the freight and passenger indexes into a single index.

Revisions: TSI numbers for November (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The November Freight TSI is 108.9, revised from 109.5 reported in last month's release. The November Passenger TSI is 115.3 revised from 115.6. The November Combined TSI is 110.6, revised from 111.1. The TSI for December, January, February and March 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, is available at <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>

More information about the comprehensive revision conducted with the March release is provided under 2011 Comprehensive Revision at <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>.

Table 1: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes since September 2011
Percent Change by Month
(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
September	109.1	1.1	115.2	1.4	110.7	1.2
October	108.8	-0.3	114.8	-0.4	110.4	-0.3
November ^R	108.9	0.1	115.3	0.5	110.6	0.2
December ^P	113.7	4.4	116.3	0.8	114.4	3.4
January ^P	109.7	-3.6	116.4	0.1	111.5	-2.5
February ^P	110.3	0.5	116.1	-0.3	111.8	0.3
March^P	109.4	-0.8	116.7	0.5	111.3	-0.4

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 2: Freight Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2009-2012
Percent change from previous month

	2009 % Change	2010 % Change	2011 % Change	2012 % Change
January	-2.4	0.5	1.0	(P) -3.6
February	2.8	1.1	-1.4	(P) 0.5
March	-4.0	1.2	2.0	(P) -0.8
April	-1.6	0.1	-1.0	
May	0.3	0.5	-2.1	
June	1.0	-0.1	2.5	
July	1.6	0.3	-0.2	
August	1.5	-0.4	0.4	
September	-0.5	1.1	1.1	
October	-0.7	0.2	-0.3	
November	2.9	-0.7	(R) 0.1	
December	0.6	2.4	(P) 4.4	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

Table 2A: Freight Transportation Services Index by Month, 2009-2012

	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	97.1	101.1	107.9	(P) 109.7
February	99.8	102.3	106.4	(P) 110.3
March	95.9	103.6	108.6	(P) 109.4
April	94.3	103.7	107.4	
May	94.6	104.2	105.2	
June	95.5	104.0	107.8	
July	97.1	104.3	107.6	
August	98.5	103.9	108.0	
September	98.0	105.0	109.1	
October	97.3	105.2	108.8	
November	100.1	104.4	(R) 108.9	
December	100.7	106.9	(P) 113.7	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
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Table 3: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes Year-to-Date Change, 2003-2012

Percent change from December 2011 to March 2012

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
2003	-0.9	-4.0	-1.7
2004	1.9	1.8	1.8
2005	1.4	1.9	1.5
2006	-0.5	2.0	0.2
2007	0.9	2.1	1.3
2008	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2
2009	-3.6	-1.9	-3.1
2010	2.9	0.7	2.3
2011	1.5	1.0	1.4
2012^P	-3.8	0.4	-2.7

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 4: Freight Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year Percent Change in the March Freight TSI (Monthly average of 2000 = 100)

	March Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2003	103.5	4.9
2004	109.4	5.8
2005	111.7	2.1
2006	110.9	-0.7
2007	110.8	-0.1
2008	109.6	-1.0
2009	95.9	-12.5
2010	103.6	8.0
2011	108.6	4.8
2012^P	109.4	0.8

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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**Table 5: Transportation Services Indexes from Previous Years
Percent Change to 2011 (March to March)**

Since March ...	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to March 2012	Passenger TSI Percent change to March 2012	Combined TSI Percent change to March 2012
2011	1	0.8	2.1	1.1
2010	2	5.6	5.3	5.6
2009	3	14.1	7.4	12.2
2008	4	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
2007	5	-1.2	0.0	-0.9
2006	6	-1.3	4.9	0.4
2005	7	-2.1	7.6	0.6
2004	8	0.0	14.2	3.8
2003	9	5.7	24.7	10.8
2002	10	10.9	25.1	14.8

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to March 2012 are all preliminary.

**Table 6: Passenger Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2009-2012
Percent change from previous month**

	2009 % Change	2010 % Change	2011 % Change	2012 % Change
January	-1.0	0.6	0.2	(P) 0.1
February	0.5	-2.1	-0.2	(P) -0.3
March	-1.4	2.3	0.9	(P) 0.5
April	1.4	0.2	-0.1	
May	-1.7	0.6	1.2	
June	0.5	0.8	-0.6	
July	1.5	-0.2	0.1	
August	-0.1	0.2	-1.2	
September	-0.6	1.0	1.4	
October	0.1	0.9	-0.4	
November	-0.1	-0.3	(R) 0.5	
December	0.2	-1.0	(P) 0.8	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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

	March Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2003	93.6	0.4
2004	102.2	9.2
2005	108.4	6.1
2006	111.2	2.6
2007	116.6	4.9
2008	116.9	0.3
2009	108.7	-7.1
2010	110.8	2.0
2011	114.3	3.2
2012^P	116.7	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, 2009-2012
Percent change from previous month**

	2009 % Change	2010 % Change	2011 % Change	2012 % Change
January	-2.0	0.5	0.7	(P) -2.5
February	2.2	0.2	-1.1	(P) 0.3
March	-3.3	1.5	1.7	(P) -0.4
April	-0.8	0.1	-0.8	
May	-0.3	0.5	-1.2	
June	0.9	0.1	1.6	
July	1.6	0.1	-0.1	
August	1.1	-0.2	-0.1	
September	-0.5	1.0	1.2	
October	-0.5	0.4	-0.3	
November	2.1	-0.6	(R) 0.2	
December	0.5	1.5	(P) 3.4	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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

	March Combined TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2003	100.5	3.6
2004	107.2	6.7
2005	110.7	3.2
2006	110.9	0.2
2007	112.3	1.3
2008	111.6	-0.7
2009	99.2	-11.1
2010	105.5	6.3
2011	110.1	4.4
2012^P	111.3	1.1

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

**Table 10: Freight Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2003-2012
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter**

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) % Growth	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun) % Growth	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep) % Growth	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec) % Growth
2003	-0.9	-1.0	1.8	3.0
2004	1.9	0.5	-0.4	0.6
2005	1.4	-0.6	-0.3	0.7
2006	-0.5	0.9	-0.6	-1.3
2007	0.9	-2.2	-0.2	1.6
2008	-0.2	0.1	-2.5	-7.0
2009	-3.6	-0.4	2.6	2.8
2010	2.9	0.5	0.9	1.9
2011	1.5	-0.7	1.3	(P) 4.2
2012	(P) -3.8			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

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Table 11: Passenger Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2003-2012
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) % Growth	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun) % Growth	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep) % Growth	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec) % Growth
2003	-4.0	0.1	4.5	2.5
2004	1.8	2.1	-0.9	2.9
2005	1.9	0.5	0.9	-0.9
2006	2.0	0.1	-0.8	3.3
2007	2.1	0.4	0.7	-0.6
2008	-0.1	-0.3	-2.7	-2.3
2009	-1.9	0.1	0.8	0.3
2010	0.7	1.6	1.0	-0.4
2011	1.0	0.5	0.3	(P) 0.9
2012	(P) 0.4			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 12: Combined Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2003-2012
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) % Growth	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun) % Growth	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep) % Growth	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec) % Growth
2003	-1.7	-0.7	2.6	2.9
2004	1.8	1.0	-0.5	1.2
2005	1.5	-0.2	0.0	0.2
2006	0.2	0.7	-0.7	0.0
2007	1.3	-1.5	0.0	1.0
2008	-0.2	0.0	-2.6	-5.8
2009	-3.1	-0.2	2.1	2.1
2010	2.3	0.8	0.9	1.2
2011	1.4	-0.4	1.0	(P) 3.3
2012	(P) -2.7			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

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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 freight index measure changes in freight shipments while the passenger index measures changes in passenger travel.

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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