



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

March 2008

## MONTHLY DELAY SUMMARY

	November 07	December 07	January 08	February 08
<b>System wide</b>				
Total delays	56	75	86	84
Average length of delay (mins.)	17.8	19.4	20	16
Number over 30 minutes	9	12	13	9
Days with Heat Restrictions/Total days	0/19	0/20	0/21	0/20
On-Time Performance	89.8%	86.5%	85.9%	85.5%
<b>Fredericksburg Line</b>				
Total delays	28	36	51	42
Average length of delay (mins.)	21.4	17.4	20	16
Number over 30 minutes	6	5	8	3
On-Time Performance	88.7%	85.6%	81.3%	83.8%
<b>Manassas Line</b>				
Total delays	28	39	35	42
Average length of delay (mins.)	13.8	21.2	20	16
Number over 30 minutes	3	7	5	6
On-Time Performance	90.8%	87.2%	89.6%	86.9%

## SYSTEM RIDERSHIP

Ridership in February 2008 increased 1.7% when compared to February 2007. Although lower than previous months, the comparison is different because the number of service days are different with leap year. However, it still represents the eighth consecutive month of growth. More importantly is that the cumulative ridership for this fiscal year compared to last year has climbed 4.4% to 14,392 average daily trips. There are now 98,259 more passenger trips than there were a year ago.

The systemwide on-time performance is hovering in the 85% range. The primary cause of the delays was train interference. There was a non-VRE related train mishap in Washington Union Station and a CSX train went into emergency on a bridge, both of which affected a number of trains on two separate evenings. Delays during the morning commute have been minimal.

We had 20 delays during February that were related to mechanical issues. Although we are not hitting our goal of 11.3 mechanical delays per month, we are continuing to reduce the average length of mechanical delays from 21 minutes in December 2007 to 15.3 minutes in February 2008. The average length of all delays in February is the lowest that it has been in the last year, with an average delay of 16 minutes.

## **MEET THE MANAGEMENT VISITS START IN APRIL**

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Meet the Management is a time honored tradition at VRE. We will once again start visiting stations, beginning Wednesday, April 2. During our Meet the Management "season," VRE management and staff visit each station over the course of four and a half months. Our first five visits in April will focus on our destination stations during the evening commute at Union Station, L'Enfant, Crystal City, Alexandria, and Franconia/Springfield. Then in May, we will turn our attention southward, alternating between the Fredericksburg Line and the Manassas Line, before ending at Lorton in August.

The schedule for April is as follows:

April 2	Union Station	3:30 pm to 7:00 pm
April 9	L'Enfant	3:30 pm to 7:00 pm
April 16	Crystal City	3:45 pm to 7:00 pm
April 23	Alexandria	3:45 pm to 7:15 pm
April 30	Franconia-Springfield	4:00 pm to 7:15 pm

While it is meaningful to our riders to see VRE management and staff, we also give them the opportunity to meet some of the other people that help their commute. Representatives from Norfolk Southern will be at the L'Enfant station and representatives from CSX will be at the Crystal City station. Amtrak management will also attend the April Meet the Managements.

## **CSX DISPATCHERS MOVING**

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On or about May 1, CSX will begin the process of decentralizing their dispatching operations. Up until this time, all of VRE's trains were dispatched from Jacksonville, Florida. With the decentralization, the Baltimore division, which VRE is a part of, will be dispatched from Halethorpe, Maryland (southwest of Baltimore). While there will be a transition period in May as the dispatchers get settled into their new offices, this is a positive change for VRE. Being closer, the dispatchers will have a better understanding of the physical aspects of the territory they dispatch and will know train crews more intimately.

## **NEW RAIL CAR UPDATE**

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The fourth set of five cars from the 50-car Gallery option will be delivered on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Testing and certification is scheduled to take place on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. We expect the new rail cars to go into revenue service during the week of March 24<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to receive 5 new cars per month until September. We have sold 15 of the old Gallery cars and intend to sell 5 more and retain 30 of the best remaining cars.

## **UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROJECTS**

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**L'Enfant Storage Track** - Siding construction has been completed. VRE performed an inspection in mid-January. We are awaiting final inspection from CSXT.

**Gainesville Haymarket MIS** – Negotiations have been completed, the grant agreement has been finalized with DRPT, and work will begin in April.

**Cherry Hill Station & Track Improvements** – The grant match agreement with KSI was signed by all parties in November. A recommendation for award will occur at the March Operations Board meeting. We are nearing finalization of the grant agreement with DRPT in order for the work to begin in April.

**Manassas City and Burke Centre Parking Garages** – Both parking garages are scheduled to be complete in late May and/or early June. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies are being planned for the Manassas Garage on June 26<sup>th</sup> and Burke Centre Garage on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Invitations will be mailed out for both ceremonies in May 2008.

## **WINTER RADIO CAMPAIGN**

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We are continuing to see a 25% increase in web hits to the “New Rider” page since the radio campaign began. The radio campaign will end on March 21<sup>st</sup>. We intend to air our next radio campaign in the fall after Labor Day.

## **PUBLIC HEARING RESULTS**

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The series of public hearings to consider a proposed 3% fare increase and possible indexing plan for future fare increases has been completed. The turnout was not large, 21 people attended the hearings in total, and there are to-date a total of 73 emails. Most of the comments received concerned adding more service and improving on-time performance. A report on all comments and suggestions will be made to the Operations Board at the April meeting.

## **INTERMODAL SECURITY TRAINING**

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VRE hosted the first Intermodal Security Training and Exercise Mass Transit Workshop (I-STEP) in Crystal City on February 28, 2008. I-STEP was designed after the model used for America’s ports and applied to multi-modal transportation sectors.

The one day program brought together VRE, Amtrak, TSA, CSX and local jurisdictional law enforcement personnel to scrutinize and analyze existing security protocols. The workshop validated many of the security elements currently in place and lead to meaningful discussions with TSA, CSX, Amtrak police and local law enforcement police to incorporate MOU’s that would initiate greater safeguards for VRE in the event an emergency situation were to impact VRE service.

VRE will build off the workshop and bring the partners together again in the coming months to conduct an actual table top drill to further vet the protocols and procedures for responding to a critical emergency that VRE might encounter.

## **INTRODUCTION TO CONGRESSMAN WITTMAN**

On February 27, I met with Congressman Robert Wittman, who has replaced former Congressman Jo Ann Davis. The Congressman was interested to learn more about what VRE was doing for his constituents, about service related issues on the entire corridor, and offered his assistance in helping to enhance commuter rail service in Virginia.

**MONTHLY PERFORMANCE MEASURES – FEBRUARY 2008**

<b>MONTHLY ON-TIME PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>ON-TIME PERCENTAGE</b>
February Fredericksburg OTP Average	83.8%
February Manassas OTP Average	86.9%
<b>VRE FEBRUARY OVERALL OTP AVERAGE</b>	<b>85.5%</b>

<b>RIDERSHIP YEAR TO DATE</b>	<b>RIDERSHIP</b>
VRE FY 2008 Passenger Totals	2,345,892
VRE FY 2007 Passenger Totals	2,247,633
<b>PERCENTAGE CHANGE</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

<b>RIDERSHIP MONTH TO MONTH COMPARISON</b>	
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MONTHLY RIDERSHIP</b>
FEBRUARY 2008	297,205
FEBRUARY 2007	263,128
<b>PERCENTAGE CHANGE</b>	<b>1.7% (NORMALIZED)</b>
<b>SERVICE DAYS (CURRENT/PRIOR)</b>	<b>20/18</b>