



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
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PRESS RELEASE

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VRE Runs All Trains Under Positive Train Control

Alexandria, Va. – Positive train control (PTC) is fully operational on all Virginia Railway Express (VRE) trains, according to the railroad’s Chief Executive Officer Doug Allen. The safety milestone was achieved April 11, 2019 when each of VRE’s 32 inbound and outbound trains on the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines ran under PTC operation. PTC is designed to automatically control train speeds and movements should an engineer not take suitable action for a given situation.

“Safety is always our top priority at VRE,” said Allen. “The implementation of PTC takes system safety to the next level and continues our commitment to providing the safest environment for riders, railroad workers and the general public.”

Implementation of PTC required close coordination with VRE’s host railroads, CSX and Norfolk Southern. While VRE was responsible for installing PTC technology on its 20 locomotives and 21 cab control cars, training employees and integrating a back-office system, the two railroads were required to place compatible equipment throughout their systems as well as on the 90 miles of track upon which VRE operates.

Industry estimates put PTC acquisition, which is federally mandated, at more than \$14 billion nationwide and maintenance at 10 to 20 percent of annual capital costs. PTC implementation is expected to cost VRE \$15 million.

Only four of 41 railroads required to implement PTC had done so as of December 31, 2018, the initial deadline imposed by the Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015. VRE was one of 33 railroads requesting an extension. The Federal Railroad Administration approved the request after determining that VRE satisfactorily met the statutory requirements necessary to qualify for an alternative schedule.

The 12th largest commuter rail service in the U.S., VRE is a transportation partnership of the Northern Virginia and Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commissions. VRE’s mission is to provide safe, cost effective, accessible, reliable, convenient, and customer responsive commuter-oriented passenger rail service. The 4.5 million rides the railroad provides annually in Northern Virginia and Washington D.C. remove some 100 million vehicle miles from the region’s interstates. Learn more at www.vre.org.

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