



## VRE POISED TO ORDER MORE LOCOMOTIVES

### Action Paves the Way for More Reliable Rail Service

**Alexandria, VA, March 24, 2009** – The VRE Operations Board on Friday took another step toward fulfilling their commitment to improving Virginia Railway Express operations by exercising an option to purchase additional locomotives from MotivePower.

The purchase of additional Tier-II locomotives was seen as a priority by the VRE Operations Board after last week's service disruptions, where three locomotives failed and stranded riders for hours. The Operations Board had earlier heard a report from the VRE CEO about the mechanic issues that disrupted service. The CEO took exception with Amtrak, who is the mechanical contractor responsible for the upkeep of the VRE locomotive fleet.

"There is a level of service that VRE riders expect when they board our trains. The problems with the existing locomotive fleet limit our ability to consistently meet those expectations," said VRE Operations Board Chairman Chris Zimmerman. He added, "For our service to succeed, it is critical that we transition ourselves as quickly as possible to these new MotivePower locomotives."

"These new locomotives are an important step in a series of initiatives this Board has taken over the past few years to improve service. When these new locomotives are in place, VRE will be better positioned to continue our mission of easing congestion, decreasing pollution and improving the quality of life for Virginia's citizens," concluded Chairman Zimmerman

VRE CEO, Dale Zehner, also noted that "While this initiative is good news for the service, I will not be satisfied until I can give complete assurance to our passengers and the Operations Board that our locomotives are being maintained to the highest standards. There can be no complacency in the upkeep of the equipment while we wait for the arrival of the new locomotives."

On Friday, the Operations Board modified their existing contract with MotivePower to increase the contract to \$33,103,342 for the purchase of up to nine locomotives. VRE will utilize nearly \$9.8M in funding through the Stimulus Bill, as well as a \$5M locomotive funding appropriation by Senator Webb and VRE formula funds. The locomotives are tentatively scheduled to start arriving on the property in October 2010 – timed to meet anticipated ridership growth over the next decade.

VRE is the nation's tenth largest commuter rail system, providing more than 3.6 million trips per year on two rail lines and 30 commuter rail trains per day. For further information regarding the locomotive acquisition or VRE ridership and/or its operation, please email Mark Roeber, Manager of Public Affairs and Government Relations, at [mroeber@vre.org](mailto:mroeber@vre.org) or call him directly at (571) 238-9060.