



# VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS UPDATE

703-684-1001 [www.vre.org](http://www.vre.org) October 21, 2009

## New Locomotives are Coming!

### Editor's Note:

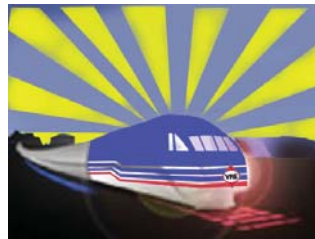
The VRE Operations Board voted on October 16, 2009 to recommend that the Commissions (NVTC and PRTC) authorize VRE to enter into a new Operating and Maintenance Services contract with Keolis Rail Services America.

Since its inception in 1992, VRE has operated under a sole source contract with Amtrak. However, federal and state procurement requirements mandated that VRE complete a competitive procurement for these services.

The selection of Keolis is in no way a reflection on Amtrak or their employees because they have been a loyal partner from the beginning.

VRE is committed to providing safe and efficient commuter rail service and looks forward to working with Keolis to enhance the commuting experience for its passengers.

At long last, new locomotives are coming! After years of wishing, wanting and needing, the universe has finally granted our wish. Between the VRE capital budget, additional funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, federal formula funds and a federal earmark approved in FY 2008; we now have the funding to purchase 15 locomotives out of an option of 20. The frame for the first locomotive is now being built at Motive Power, Inc., located in Boise, Idaho. Each locomotive



takes about eighteen months to complete. The first one will be delivered in June 2010 with the others scheduled to roll off the production line beginning in November and continuing at about two per month until the order is complete. Timing on this order is currently 100 percent on-time and is in full compliance with our contract.

The new locomotives will be "Tier 2". As a result, they will produce lower emissions than our older locomotives. Continued on page 2

## New Connecting Bus Service - Woodbridge to Tysons

If any of you have ever had to travel to the Tysons Corner area for business or a meeting but didn't want to fight the traffic, or if you know someone who travels to that area regularly, there is good news! A new public transit option will be available starting November 9. The Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) plans to introduce a commuter bus route from eastern Prince William County to Tysons Corner this fall. The brand new buses are equipped with wi-fi and have reclining seats, luggage racks, personal lights and temperature control. The new service is being funded entirely by the Virginia Department of Transportation to help mitigate congestion in the Tysons area during the construction of the High Occupancy Toll lanes and the Dulles Metrorail.



The bus route will originate at the Woodbridge VRE station and then make one more stop at

the Rt. 123 & I-95 commuter lot to pick up passengers. The buses will then travel to Tysons corner via the HOV lanes on I-95 to Franconia and then travel on 1-495 to Route 7. The bus will stop at the West Park Transit Center and the Tysons Corner Transit Center. Total travel time is about 90 minutes from the farthest points. There will be four morning trips in and four afternoon trips out.

VRE Passengers with a Monthly ticket can transfer to the bus one way for free (Woodbridge to Tysons Corner) but must pay for the return bus trip. The fare will be FREE for the first week of service. After that, the first six months will be at a reduced price of \$3.00 or \$2.40 with a SmarTrip Card. Schedules are being finalized and will be posted on the VRE web site when available.

If you know someone who travels to Tysons, spread the word.



### Upcoming Dates

#### Thu. October 22

VRE staff at Franconia/Springfield to process VRE Reduced Fare IDs

#### Mon. November 2

Public hearing Elimination of Youth Fares - Noon at VRE Office in Alexandria

#### Tue. November 3

On-line Forum Noon

#### Wed. November 11

Veterans Day No VRE Service

#### Mon. November 16

VRE Reduced Fare ID card required to purchase and use disabled fares



VRE Update is a publication of Virginia Railway Express. The newsletter is published monthly 12 times per year. Stories included are for the sole use of VRE riders. Comments and questions may be directed to VRE at [gotrains@vire.org](mailto:gotrains@vire.org) or at (703) 684-1001.

# New Locomotives... Continued from page 1



tives. Current US emission standards for railway locomotives apply to newly manufactured, as well as remanufactured railroad locomotives and locomotive engines. The new standards are met through improved engine design methods, without the use of exhaust after-treatment. Tier 3 standards, which require more stringent emission requirements, will become effective in 2011.

Our new locomotives will also have more power. They will have a 3600 horsepower engine compared to the 2300 hp engines that we currently have. They will each weigh 286,000 pounds and be strong enough to pull a 12 car train.

The interior controls will be very similar to our current cab cars but quite a bit

different from our current locomotives. Our engineers will all be required to have some additional training before taking over the controls of one of these new engines.

Other transit systems around the country such as MARC, Metrolink and GoTransit have almost identical equipment except for minor differences. So far, they have all been very happy with the equipment. We are also still trying to secure funding for the additional 5 locomotives (out of the option of 20). We're actively pursuing any additional money. We will let you know if any of these funds come through enabling us to purchase additional locomotives.

We know you can't wait to see what they look like. As soon as the first one is built, we will share photos on our web site.

## VRE's Undercover Law Enforcement Officer Program

Transit systems across the country are stepping up their security efforts in response to the recent terrorist arrests. The LEO program is just one of the ways VRE is addressing this issue.

VRE's Undercover Law Enforcement Officer program has been in effect since 2001. The program is designed to be one component in VRE's security strategy to increase the level of security provided on our system. The program enables VRE passengers who are members of various law enforcement agencies and are members of this program to ride VRE for free. To be eligible for this program these law enforcement agents have to be active duty, sworn law enforcement officers with the power of arrest. Additionally, they declare that they are armed while on board VRE and are authorized to carry a concealed weapon. These Undercover Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) agree to assist VRE train crews if there is a possible felony on board VRE, or the train crew considers an incident hazardous to themselves or to the passengers on board the train.



The VRE Undercover Law Enforcement Officer Program has members from the US Marshal Service, US Park Police, NCIS, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), DEA, and several others. VRE train crews are trained on the protocol to be used to request assistance from these LEOs on board the trains. Crews have also been trained on how to identify LEOs.

Because so many members of these various agencies commute to Washington, the program has become a huge success. Currently we have 130 members in the program, and the waiting list for new members is about six to nine months. To sign up for the program and become a LEO you must first request an application packet from our office, fill it out and come to our office in person with a current photo, proper credentials, and a professional e-mail address that we can verify. The active member list will be verified regularly by VRE through various authentication processes.

Following a recent evaluation of the program's success, VRE has been making a few modifications to the program. The first

# Types of Common Rail Systems

Rail transportation has been around since the early nineteenth century. It replaced America's network of canals, inland water steam navigation and other early forms of transportation. However, it has yet to be replaced as a key facet in America's transportation portfolio. Given rail transport's tremendous efficiency and cost-effectiveness, there are many different forms of rail in use today. Ranging from small to large, they all serve a basic purpose: to move people and freight. Here is a basic overview of the railroad industry's main components.

**Class I Freight Carrier:** Generally focused on moving freight, a Class I railroad is defined by the Surface Transportation board as having in excess of \$250 million dollars in annual revenue. Class I railroad companies own and maintain a huge network of routes connecting different locations and mainline tracks spanning several states. They possess a large fleet of locomotives and railcars suited to shipping many different kinds of materials. The Class I carriers are Canadian Pacific Railway, Norfolk Southern Railway and CSX, Union Pacific, BNSF, Canadian National and Kansas City Southern. Collectively, these companies make up a large majority ownership of all operable tracks in the United States.

**Class II or "Regional" Freight Carriers:** These railroads are smaller than their Class I brethren in both track-miles and revenue. A regional railroad is classified as earning less than \$250 million but more than \$20.5 million in annual revenue. Regional railroads often own mainline track routes to move goods long distances but often have a network of slower speed secondary tracks that branch out and connect with factories and mills that may not generate or receive as many shipments as industries on a Class I system might. Regional railroads play an important role by providing small companies with access to the major rail infrastructures across America and generating traffic for Class I railroads. Some examples of Regional carriers in America are the Reading & Northern Railroad, Wheeling & Lake Erie and the Maine, Montreal & Atlantic System.

**Class III or "Shortline" Freight Carriers:** Shortline railroads are often the smallest of the point-to-point rail systems in America. Their trackage territory can range from only a few miles and upward. Their official classification is contingent upon annual revenues being less than \$20 million dollars annually.

A large percentage of American shortline railroads are slower speed "branch line" tracks that were sold off by larger railroads. Shortlines often only have a few locomotives but can provide greater levels of attention to customers on its lines than a larger railroad carrier with many customers and lines. Some examples of shortline railroads in America are Lehigh Railway (56 track miles), Towanda Monroeton Shippers Lifeline (6 track miles), and Delaware-Lackawanna (85 track miles).

**Class I National Passenger Carrier:** After most railroads were permitted to abandon passenger service in the mid twentieth century, Amtrak was formed by the US Government to preserve passenger service with federal funding given its unprofitable nature. Today, Amtrak officially qualifies as a Class I carrier due to the level of revenue it receives. It utilizes a network of its own tracks and over track usage rights on other railroads to provide service in most regions across the country.

**Regional Commuter Carrier:** Also known as Commuter Rail, Virginia Railway Express finds itself in this category. These carriers can either operate on a network of privately held right-of-way or can operate over host railroad territory. Regional Commuter carriers are generally found around dense urban areas. Regional carriers generally own or lease their own fleet of specially built passenger equipment capable of speeds of up to 79 mph and most often operate under partnerships with a transportation authority or government agency. Some other examples of Regional Commuter carriers would be the Trinity Railway Express, based in Texas, SEPTA Regional Rail Division, based outside of Philadelphia, and New Jersey Transit Regional Rail, based in Northern New Jersey.

**Closed System Rapid Transit:** This system will most often operate on its own network of trackage within a city or connecting two major population centers. The defining difference between this system and other previously listed systems is train frequency. Within a rapid transit network, there are generally a large amount of connection options and routine train arrivals and departures without interference from other types of trains (closed system). The equipment is generally electrically propelled, versus conventional diesel-electric locomotive use. An example of this type of system, locally, is Metro. Nationally, another example is New York's MTA.

## *New VRE Issued ID for Riders with Disabilities*

November 16 will be the first day that vendors will require riders with disabilities to have a VRE Reduced Fare ID to purchase tickets. The rider must also carry the ID when riding on a reduced fare ticket as proof of eligibility.

The application can be found on our website at <http://www.vre.org/programs/PDF/Disabled-ID-Application.pdf>.

Discounted fares for Senior citizens will remain in effect and regular ID showing date of birth will suffice as proof of age. However, if you would like a Reduced Fare ID, you may apply for one by providing Part A of the Reduced Fare ID application and providing proof of age.

If you have questions or concerns about the application process, feel free to call us at 703-684-1001 or email us at [gotrains@vre.org](mailto:gotrains@vre.org).

# VRE's Undercover Law...

Continued from page 2

## Public Hearings for Elimination of Youth Fares

Currently, children 6 and under ride free with a fare paying adult and riders 7-21 can purchase tickets for 50% off.

We are recommending to our Board that riders 10 and under ride free with a fare paying adult and eliminate the 50 percent youth fare discount for 11- to 21-year-olds.

We are currently soliciting public comment on these changes.

You have four means available to comment on this issue:

Email us at [publiccomment@vre.org](mailto:publiccomment@vre.org)

Fax us at 703-684-1313

Write to us at  
VRE  
Public Comment 1500  
King St.  
Suite 202  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Visit us at a formal public hearing on Monday, November 2nd at 12 noon at the VRE office.

The public comment period will end on Friday, November 6.



of these being that all active members of this program will have to complete VRE Incident Response Training by December 31, 2009. There are several Saturdays that this training is being offered. The Undercover LEOs are asked to

register for one of these training sessions without delay. The training program is a requirement and will consist of classroom training as well as hands on training in the rail yard. All 130 members must sign up for and complete the training by December 31st, 2009.

Starting in May, 2009, VRE began to send a private electronic newsletter every month to the active members of the Undercover LEO program. These newsletters inform the undercover LEOs about possible security issues related to public transit, including current alert levels, safety features on board our trains, safety and security protocols that VRE follows and significant security dates.

This program is ongoing and will continue to be improved regularly for the security of our passengers. Remember, someone sitting right next to you may just be undercover.

## Quantico Station's Rich History

The Quantico VRE Station, located at 550 Railroad Avenue in the historic town of Quantico, Virginia, is the fourth stop on the Fredericksburg line after Fredericksburg, Leeland and Brooke. The station was originally built by the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac railroad in 1953, and was totally renovated by VRE and re-opened in April of 2005. The original waiting room has been transformed into a railroad museum of sorts, with walls covered by framed newspaper articles, photos, posters and memorabilia depicting the rich history of the town, the railroad and the Marines.

The area now known as Quantico (which means "by large stream") was first inhabited by Native Americans. In 1608 John Smith mapped an area called "Patawomek" and noted with surprise that the Iroquois and some Dogue Indians of the Algonquin Tribe lived there in harmony. Quantico was first visited by European explorers in the summer of 1608. Later in the year, land owners started appearing. After the turn of the century, the area became popular because of tobacco trade in Aquia Harbor.

The Quantico Road was opened in 1731, allowing vital access to and from the western part of the state. By 1759 the road stretched across the Blue Ridge Mountains into the Shenandoah Valley.

The first military presence came during the revolutionary war, when the Quantico Creek village became a main naval base for the Commonwealth of Virginia's 72 vessel fleet on which many Virginia state militia served. The area was first visited by the Marine Corps in 1816 when a group of Marines traveling by ship to Washington was halted by ice in the Potomac, forcing them to debark and march to the town of Dumfries. Here, they met a young captain, Archibald Henderson, who lived close by. Being a generous man, he hired a wagon for them and sent them on their way.

During the Civil War, control of the Potomac river became very important to both sides of the two armies. The Confederates picked the Quantico Creek area on the Potomac to set up their gun batteries. Their artillery could reach anything on the water, thus deterring the Unions' use of the water highway. While battles took place in Manassas and Fredericksburg, the gun positions around Quantico were used until the end of the war.

Following the war, railroads became a more integral part of transportation. In 1872, the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad was formed when several railroads



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# Quantico Station's History...

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north and south met at Quantico Creek.

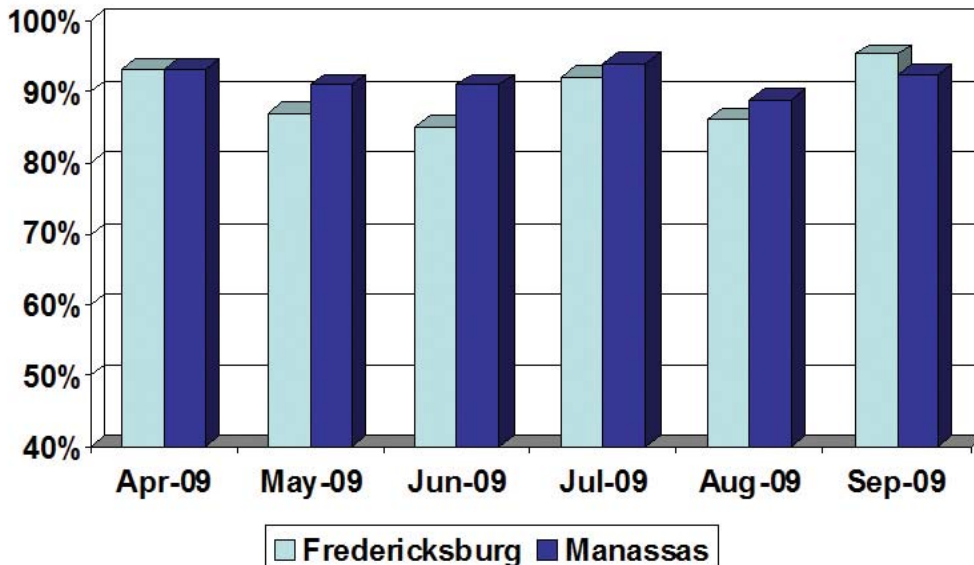
The surrounding village known as Quantico was built by The Quantico Company. This was the start of a thriving tourist and fishing town. A large hotel was built, the beach was cleaned and one street was finished complete with sewers. A dance pavilion was set up with a merry-go-round and small lots were offered for sale. By the summer of 1916, the steamer St. Johns and the train brought more than 2,500 "fun-seekers" each week to the site from Washington and Richmond. The same year, railroad side tracks were extended to the shipping point on Quantico Creek. The Quantico shipyard started up with plans to build ocean freighters and tankers. Soon, the U.S. entered World War I and the company obtained U.S. Navy contracts to build three wooden ships. In 1917, Marine Corps commander Major General George Barnett was desperate to find a suitable area large enough to train at least 7,000 Marines. By then the Quantico Company was in financial trouble and agreed to lease 5,300 acres surrounding the town of Quantico to the U.S. government for the base which became nicknamed "slippery mud" because of the knee-deep, red, gumbo-like mud which often bogged down ox-carts and wagons. The hotel became the officers quarters later named Walter Hall. Temporary tents and crude wooden barracks were built

and some slept in the dance pavilion. By August, enough barracks were built along with a hospital capable of housing 100 patients. Brig. General John A. Lejeune took command of the base in September when the first battalion which had been training since July sailed aboard the USS Henderson for France.

During the rush to provide housing, hundreds of skilled workers were needed. Many workers were employed and lived and worked in the town. Many of the descendants of those workers still have businesses there today. The town was officially incorporated in 1927 and received their charter in 1934.

Today, the station serves both Amtrak and VRE trains. The waiting room is open week days from 5:00am to 7:00pm. VRE tickets (including TLCs for all zones) are available for sale from the kiosk vendor located inside the station. "The Coffee Club Café" also sells wonderful gourmet coffee, tea, sodas and snacks. The waiting room is available to rent on weekends for parties, meetings or receptions. It is equipped with tables and chairs and has two accessible rest rooms. Plenty of parking is available and the maximum capacity of the station is 100 people. The station can be rented for \$100.00 an hour with a \$500.00 refundable deposit. Call Ann King at VRE (703) 838-5417 for an application or to find out more.

## On-Time Performance Over The Last Six Months



### On-Time Performance September 2009

#### Fredericksburg Line

- 300 – 100%
- 302 – 95%
- 304 – 95%
- 306 – 100%
- 308 – 95%
- 310 – 95%
- 301 – 81%
- 303 – 95%
- 305 – 100%
- 307 – 100%
- 309 – 95%
- 311 – 90%
- 313 – 95%

Overall – 95%

#### Manassas Line

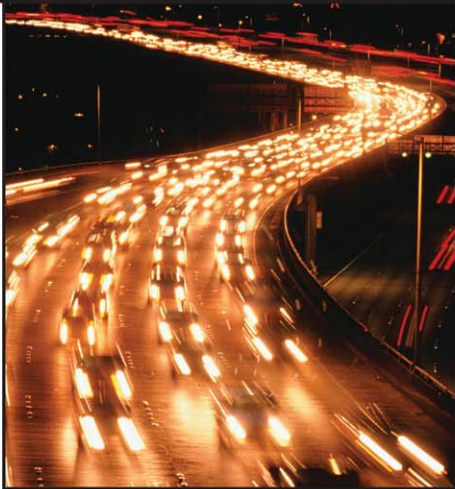
- 322 – 90%
- 324 – 100%
- 326 – 95%
- 328 – 95%
- 330 – 100%
- 332 – 100%
- 325 – 95%
- 327 – 100%
- 329 – 100%
- 331 – 86%
- 333 – 86%
- 335 – 71%
- 337 – 80%

Overall – 92%

\*A train is considered delayed if it is more than 5 minutes later than the posted schedule into its final destination.

**GIVE THIS TO  
THE BOSS!!!**

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- Commuters in the Fredericksburg Region endure some of the longest commutes to work in the nation!
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