

5. EXISTING TRAINSETS, NEW EQUIPMENT, AND MAINTENANCE

The San Joaquins and Capitol Corridor currently share a combined fleet of 15 F59 PHI Locomotives, 3 P42 Locomotives (leased), 2 DASH-8 Locomotives, 6 Charger Locomotives, and 84 bi-level passenger coaches and food service cars. The San Joaquins also utilizes 14 State-owned Comet Car coaches, as well as lease 3 Horizon Café cars and 3 F40 Cabbage cars from Amtrak.¹

Comet Car Trainsets

On October 21, 2013, Caltrans Division of Rail introduced a trainset of refurbished Comet Cars into service on the San Joaquins route. Caltrans' decision to purchase and use Comet Car trainsets on the San Joaquins route was intended to provide additional seating capacity through the running of longer train sets on the service. Caltrans has clearly stated to SJJPA that the use of the Comet Car trainset is a short-term solution to add capacity to the San Joaquins until new rail passenger cars are delivered, and that the deployment of the Comet Car trainset is intended to increase the ridership and revenue of the San Joaquins.

While use of the Comet Car trainset increases the seating capacity of the San Joaquins, there are some negative aspects to having single-level Comet Car trainsets deployed, including: high-level boarding (which requires all passengers to climb a steep set of stairs), narrow doors that are manually opened, use of a manually cranked wheelchair lift at all stations, bike storage and large luggage stored in separate baggage cars, and costs associated with additional train attendants and maintenance. SJJPA previously submitted formal comments to Caltrans, raising concerns regarding these aspects of the Comet Car trainsets. However, with a lack of additional available bi-level equipment, the Comet Car trainsets are proving to be a valuable resource for the San Joaquins and the State.

California Cars

The San Joaquins primarily utilizes bi-level California Cars, which are owned by the State of California. The bi-level equipment was purchased in the 1990's for

use on the three California Intercity Passenger Rail Corridors. The California Car fleet in Northern California is shared between the San Joaquins and Capitol Corridor services to allow for maximum flexibility in seating capacity. The San Joaquins currently runs eight trainsets for its seven daily round-trips. Bi-level equipment assignments for the Northern California fleet will be studied to see if there can be further optimization of equipment based upon peak loads of paired trains.

New Equipment

With the increase in ridership on the State supported services, Caltrans, owner of the rolling stock, recognized the need for additional passenger cars to expand seating capacity and continue to meet the growing demand of the State's intercity rail services. To meet the demand, Caltrans worked with the Federal Railroad Administration and States for Passenger Rail Coalition to develop a program to procure additional locomotives and passenger rail cars. Caltrans was successful in bringing together federal High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program funding and Prop 1B funds to acquire additional equipment.

As a result of these efforts, Caltrans' Division of Rail procured 6 new diesel-electric locomotives – called "Charger Locomotives" – which were delivered by Siemens for use in the California fleet in early 2017. Six locomotives are for the Northern California Fleet and will be shared between the San Joaquins and Capitol Corridor trains. It is anticipated all six new locomotives will be in service by October 2017. The Charger Locomotives meet EPA Tier IV emission standards and are capable of 125 mph operation. These new locomotives will mostly be used to replace locomotives being leased from Amtrak. Additionally, the State has executed an option for an additional 16 locomotives.

As part of the Prop 1B funding for additional passenger rail cars and locomotives, funding was set aside for the implementation of an improved on-board communications program called "On-Board Information System (OBIS)." OBIS is due to go online in late 2018 to early 2019 in all existing San Joaquins and Capitol Corridor trainsets.

¹ CCJPA FY 2017-18 – FY 2018-19 Draft Business Plan Update

Maintenance and Renovation

Currently, SJJPA and CCJPA are responsible for the administration and maintenance supervision of the State-owned fleet of rail cars and locomotives assigned to Northern California. In accordance with the ITA between SJJPA and the State, SJJPA is working with Caltrans, Amtrak, and CCJPA to share in the responsibility for administration and supervision responsibilities for the maintenance of the state-owned fleet assigned to Northern California. Currently, CCJPA is entrusted with ensuring the Capitol Corridor and San Joaquins rail fleet is operated and maintained to the high standards of reliability, cleanliness, and safety.

SJJPA will continue to work closely with CCJPA, Caltrans, and Amtrak to refine the maintenance and operations programs to improve the reliability, safety, and cost-effectiveness of the rail fleet. Caltrans, Amtrak, and CCJPA have created a program of periodic overhauls to the existing train fleet that will improve the fleet performance. The main engines of the original fleet of F59 Locomotives were rebuilt and upgraded from 2011-2015 to exceed current EPA TIER II emissions standards. They are also scheduled for a mid-life overhaul in 2018-2019. All locomotives are now equipped with a digital security camera system to improve safety and security. In addition, 14 California Cab cars have been converted to Cab/Baggage/Bike cars similar to the five newer Surfliner Cabs, to provide greater baggage storage and 13 more bike racks.²

SJJPA anticipates a number of upcoming projects in FY 2017/18 to renovate and improve some of the equipment used in the Northern California Fleet. Projects include replacing HVAC units to provide better air quality and climate control using new environmentally-friendly technology and refrigerants; rehabbing the upper level of diner cars to improve seating capacity, food storage, lighting, and counter top space; improving monitoring equipment in cab cars and locomotives; replacing door mechanics and side paneling on certain passenger cars; and upgrading the Wi-Fi system.

² *Ibid.*

Renewable Diesel Implementation

SJJPA is committed to helping meet California's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction goals. One strategy SJJPA is exploring is utilizing renewable diesel in the locomotives used to power its fleet of trains. SJJPA is currently working with the Capitol Corridor to test the use of renewable diesel, first in one of the older F59 Locomotives, and later in one of the new Charger Locomotives. Testing began in early 2017. If results are positive, SJJPA expects to work aggressively to switch all fuel used by San Joaquins locomotives to renewable diesel.

SJJPA is also exploring utilizing renewable diesel in bus fleets used to run the extensive Thruway system. Several transit agencies, including the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, are already successfully using renewable diesel in bus and automobile fleets. SJJPA plans to work with Amtrak to update contracts with bus operators to require the use of renewable diesel.