



## About VIA Rail

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## Overview

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VIA Rail Canada operates the national passenger rail service on behalf of the Government of Canada. An independent Crown Corporation established in 1977, the corporation provides travellers with safe, efficient and cost-effective passenger transportation in the country's two official languages. VIA consistently ranks as one of the most trusted transportation companies in Canada. In Leger Marketing's 2013 Top 100 Companies in Canada survey, VIA outranked every other transportation company.

VIA Rail operates almost 500 trains weekly on 12,500 kilometres of track, and serves 450 communities across the country, from coast to coast and north to Hudson Bay. VIA carried nearly four million passengers in 2012.

VIA's fleet includes 396 passenger cars and 78 active locomotives. In addition to 159 railway stations, VIA operates four modern maintenance facilities, and employs some 2,600 people. While VIA owns 223 kilometres of track, most of the infrastructure used by the passenger service is owned and managed by the freight railways, including ten different national and short-line operators.

## Passenger Services

VIA provides passenger services mandated by the Government of Canada. These include rapid intercity services, cross-Canada services, and services to remote communities.

In Western Canada, VIA provides year-round, all-weather services, including the legendary Canadian train operating between Toronto and Vancouver two times per week during off-peak season (November 1st 2012 until April 30th 2013) and three times per week during peak season (May 1st 2013 until October 31st 2013). VIA also operates regional services in the West, between Jasper, Alberta and Prince Rupert, British Columbia; between Winnipeg and Churchill, Manitoba.

In the Ontario - Quebec Corridor, VIA provides intercity passengers with fast, convenient and affordable service, downtown-to-downtown\* between Canada's largest business centres. More than 429 Corridor trains run per week, carrying 80 percent of VIA's total ridership.

VIA also operates trains to remote communities in northern Quebec and Ontario, on routes designated by the Government to meet regional transportation needs.

In Eastern Canada VIA provides train service three times per week between Montreal and Gaspé, and between Montreal and Halifax to board the Ocean.

\*In most cases. The Ottawa station is located 6km away from downtown.

## Corporate Performance

Since 1990, the first year that VIA Rail began operating its current network, VIA has focused on reducing overhead, administrative and operating costs, while improving the quality of service to attract more customers and increase revenues.

As a result, the level and quality of passenger rail service across the country have improved, while costs to the public for operating the service have fallen. Since 1990, VIA Rail has:

- Reduced reliance on government operating funding by 32%;
- Increased revenues by 94%;
- Improved cost recovery by 72%;
- Increased passenger miles by 9%.

## Customer Focus

In recent years, VIA's performance has been challenged by shifting market conditions, including a drop in tourist travel from the US and overseas. In addition, aging equipment and increased rail traffic congestion has affected the reliability and overall performance of passenger trains.

Since 2007, the Government of Canada has invested \$923 million, including \$407 million from the Economic Action Plan, in VIA Rail Canada for passenger rail modernization and expansion. A significant portion of these capital investments will be devoted to infrastructure improvements in the Ontario-Quebec corridor. This is VIA's busiest market, generating almost 80 per cent of its ridership and 75 per cent of its revenues. These improvements will help eliminate delays and increase track capacity, which will enable VIA to reduce trip times and offer more frequent service.

Additional overhauls and upgrading work on key elements of VIA's locomotive and rolling stock fleets will also benefit VIA's operations, including its transcontinental tourist trains and remote services. Reconfigured sleeping cars will position VIA's Canadian at the forefront of travel and tourism experiences in Canada while the rebuilt F40 locomotives will further reduce VIA's greenhouse gas emissions adding to the overall environmental benefits of rail travel.


The end benefit will provide an even more reliable, cost-efficient and environmentally friendly service for the more than four million travellers who choose VIA annually.

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 cite: [http://www.viarail.ca/en/about-via-rail](#)

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*cited in Sachs v. Republic of Austria, No. 11-15458 archived on January 31, 2014*