

## CERTIFICATION OF AMTRAK READING ROOMS

### **a. Internal Review of FOIA Reading Rooms**

In response to the June 25, 2008 memorandum regarding *Guidance on Submitting Certification of Agency Compliance with FOIA's Reading Room Compliance* issued by the Department of Justice (DOJ), Amtrak formed an ad hoc committee comprised of its FOIA personnel. A review of Amtrak's traditional and electronic reading rooms was undertaken to determine whether they currently meet the statutory requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Provided below is a summary of the review process.

- 1) A survey of the materials in the Corporation's "traditional reading room" was carried out as part of the review process, and it was determined that all documents have been posted on Amtrak's FOIA web page. A decision was therefore made to no longer maintain the "traditional reading room" since Amtrak has made available a computer terminal for public access to its "electronic reading room" since September 2006.
- 2) As part of the review process, the Committee consulted with Amtrak's Information Technology (IT) Department to ascertain whether there have been any changes with regard to Amtrak's Major Information Systems since the list was compiled in April 2007.
- 3) The FOIA Office also reviewed Amtrak's FY08 FOIA log to determine if there were multiple requests for the same records. There were no records which met the criteria for "frequently requested records."
- 4) A review of Amtrak's policy statements, administrative staff manuals, and staff instructions was also carried out by the ad hoc committee. The committee recommended adding a statement to the FOIA web page clarifying that Amtrak does not adjudicate cases and therefore has no final opinions or orders. This statement was previously included in the *FOIA Handbook*.
- 5) Finally, a review of the information currently posted on Amtrak's FOIA web page was carried out to determine if it was up-to-date and whether any additional information should be added, deleted, or revised.

### **b. Reading Room Deficiencies Addressed**

Amtrak has not identified any deficiencies with regard to its Electronic Reading Room. The following actions have been taken, however, to enhance Amtrak's web page as the result of the above-described review process.

#### **▪ Final opinions and orders issued in the adjudication of cases**

A statement has been added to the FOIA web page indicating that Amtrak does not issue final opinions or orders and therefore has no records for this category of records.

▪ **Policy statements, staff manuals, and instructions**

Amtrak's FOIA web page is linked to other Amtrak web pages containing policy statements and directives to Amtrak employees that affect the public. The FOIA web page is therefore automatically updated when changes occur.

▪ **Frequently requested records**

There were no deficiencies identified with regard to this category. For the convenience of the public, however, Amtrak will continue to make the corporation's Annual Reports and Consolidated Financial Statements available on both the FOIA and "Inside Amtrak" web pages.

▪ **Major Information Systems**

One additional system was identified and added to Amtrak's list of "Major Information Systems," and the title of another system was changed to reflect a more accurate description of the system. This listing will continue to be included in Amtrak's *FOIA Handbook* and also will be posted as a separate item on Amtrak's web page for the convenience of the public.

▪ **Other Actions**

Amtrak has made a decision to no longer maintain a "traditional reading room." Upon appointment, a dedicated computer terminal is available for the public to access Amtrak's FOIA web page. Amtrak has also taken steps to move this computer to a more convenient location for public use.

*Amtrak's FOIA Handbook* and *Instructions for Making a Request* were updated to reflect minor changes such as phone and fax numbers of FOIA personnel, and the definition of news media was updated. In addition, the *OPEN Government Act of 2007* containing the December 2007 amendments to FOIA was posted to Amtrak's web page.

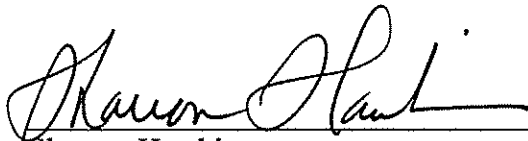
A link was also added to Amtrak's "Other Reports" web page in order to make more information regarding Amtrak readily available to the public.

Amtrak's web page was rearranged to include the above described documents and to make it more user friendly.

**Certification**

I hereby certify that Amtrak's electronic reading room is in compliance with requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.

11/21/08  
Date

  
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Sharron Hawkins  
FOIA Officer