



U.S Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20590
www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm

BTS Data

BTS 22-10

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

Contact: Dave Smallen

Tel: 202-366-5568

Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Rose 0.9% in March from February

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) rose 0.9 percent in March from its February level, rising for the third consecutive month, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1). The March Freight TSI rose 2.6 percent from March 2009, the first year-to-year increase in the freight index since July 2008 (Table 4).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reported that the Freight TSI index has risen 4.5 percent over the last 10 months, starting in June, after declining 15.3 percent in the previous 10 months beginning in August 2008. The index has increased in eight of the last 10 months (Table 2). The index started 2010 with an increase of 1.6 percent in the first three months (Table 3). For additional historic data, go to <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>

The Freight TSI measures the month-to-month changes in freight shipments in ton-miles, which are then combined into one index. The index measures the output of the for-hire freight transportation industry and consists of data from for-hire trucking, rail, inland waterways, pipelines and air freight.

The March Freight TSI of 97.8 is a 4.5 percent increase from the recent low of 93.5 reached in May 2009. In May, the index was at its lowest level since June 1997. The Freight TSI is down 13.4 percent from its historic peak of 112.9 reached in May 2006.

Although the index rose 2.6 percent from March 2009 to March 2010, it still remains below the March level of all the previous years since 1997. The 13.2 percent decline from March 2008 to March 2009 left the Freight TSI at its lowest level for March since March 1997 when it was 90.8 (Table 4).

--more--

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE ADD ONE

The freight index is down 12.5 percent in the five years from March 2005. The index is down 1.9 percent in the 10 years from March 2000 (Table 5).

The TSI is a seasonally adjusted index that measures changes from the monthly average of the base year of 2000. It includes historic data from 1990 to the present. Release of the April index is scheduled for June 9.

For a video explanation of the TSI, see [Overview of the Transportation Services Index](#). For a BTS report explaining the TSI, *Transportation Services Index and the Economy* is available for download in the [BTS bookstore](#).

Transportation Services Index for Passengers

The TSI for passengers rose 1.6 percent in March from its February level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI March 2010 level of 109.5 was 0.9 percent above the March 2009 level, following a one-year decline. The 7.3 percent decrease from March 2008 to March 2009 was the largest March-to-March decrease in the 20-year history of the TSI (Table 7). The index is up 0.7 percent in five years and up 10.6 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

The passenger TSI measures the month-to-month changes in travel conducted in the for-hire passenger transportation sector. The seasonally adjusted index consists of data from air, local transit and intercity rail.

Combined Freight and Passenger Index

The combined freight and passenger TSI rose 1.1 percent in March from its February level (Table 8). The combined TSI March 2010 level of 100.4 was 2.2 percent higher than the March 2009 level for the first March-to-March increase in three years (Table 9). The combined index is down 9.4 percent in five years, but despite recent declines, is up 0.9 percent in 10 years (Table 5). The combined TSI merges the freight and passenger indexes into a single index.

1st Quarter Changes

The Freight TSI rose 1.6 percent in the first quarter, for only the sixth quarterly increase in the past 20 quarters but the second in the last three quarters (Table 10). The Passenger TSI rose 1.2 percent in the first quarter, rising after one quarterly decline (Table 11). The combined TSI rose 1.5 percent in the first quarter, rising after one quarterly decrease (Table 12).

More on TSI

Note: TSI numbers for November (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The November Freight TSI is 98.4, revised from the 96.2 reported in last month's release. The November Passenger TSI is 110.1, revised from 108.8. The November Combined TSI is 101.0, revised from 99.0. The TSI for December, January, February and March are preliminary.

--more--

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD TWO

TSI revision policy: TSI is updated monthly with the latest four months' index numbers considered preliminary. Each month BTS releases the latest preliminary TSI, and replaces the oldest preliminary TSI with a revised TSI. More information about the monthly revision policy, is available at <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>

More information about the comprehensive revision conducted with the July release is provided under 2009 Comprehensive Revision at <http://www.bts.gov/xml/tsi/src/index.xml>

Table 1: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes since September 2009

Percent Change by Month

(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
September	96.6	0.1	110.4	-0.2	99.7	0.0
October	95.8	-0.9	110.6	0.2	99.0	-0.6
November ^R	98.4	2.8	110.1	-0.5	101.0	1.9
December ^P	96.2	-2.2	108.2	-1.7	98.8	-2.1
January ^P	96.6	0.4	109.5	1.2	99.4	0.6
February ^P	96.9	0.3	107.8	-1.5	99.3	-0.1
March^P	97.8	0.9	109.5	1.6	100.4	1.1

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 2: Freight Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2007-2010
Percent change from previous month

	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth	2010 % Growth
January	-0.6	2.3	-2.5	(P) 0.4
February	-0.3	-0.9	1.0	(P) 0.3
March	1.9	-1.4	-3.6	(P) 0.9
April	-0.7	0.6	-1.8	
May	-0.4	0.0	-0.1	
June	-1.0	-0.8	0.6	
July	-0.3	0.8	1.9	
August	0.7	-2.2	0.7	
September	-1.0	-1.6	0.1	
October	1.7	-0.6	-0.9	
November	0.6	-2.2	(R) 2.8	
December	-0.1	-2.8	(P) -2.2	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

--more--

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD THREE

Table 3: Freight, Passenger and Combined Transportation Services Indexes Year-to-Date Change, 2001-2010
Percent change from December of previous year
December to March

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
2001	1.4	-0.5	0.8
2002	1.3	2.3	1.6
2003	-1.4	-4.2	-2.2
2004	1.6	1.4	1.6
2005	0.8	2.0	1.1
2006	-0.4	1.5	0.1
2007	0.9	1.5	1.0
2008	0.0	-1.0	-0.3
2009	-5.0	-2.0	-4.3
2010^P	1.6	1.2	1.5

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 4: Freight Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year
Percent change in the March Freight TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	99.3	-0.4
2002	98.7	-0.6
2003	103.1	4.5
2004	109.7	6.4
2005	111.8	1.8
2006	110.8	-0.9
2007	110.3	-0.4
2008	109.8	-0.5
2009	95.3	-13.2
2010^P	97.8	2.6

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD FOUR

**Table 5: Transportation Services Indexes from Previous Years
Percent Change to 2010 (March to March)**

Since March . . .	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to Mar 2010	Passenger TSI Percent change to Mar 2010	Combined TSI Percent change to Mar 2010
2009	1	2.6	0.9	2.2
2008	2	-10.9	-6.5	-9.9
2007	3	-11.4	-6.0	-10.0
2006	4	-11.7	-1.4	-9.3
2005	5	-12.5	0.7	-9.4
2004	6	-10.9	7.1	-6.6
2003	7	-5.2	16.8	0.1
2002	8	-0.9	17.4	3.4
2001	9	-1.5	9.1	0.7
2000	10	-1.9	10.6	0.9

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to March 2010 are all preliminary.

**Table 6: Passenger Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2007-2010
Percent change from previous month**

	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth	2010 % Growth
January	0.3	-0.2	-0.7	(P) 1.2
February	-0.7	-1.0	-0.4	(P) -1.5
March	2.0	0.2	-0.9	(P) 1.6
April	-0.3	1.1	1.4	
May	2.4	-0.5	-1.2	
June	-2.1	-0.4	0.5	
July	-0.3	-0.2	1.3	
August	1.0	-1.1	0.0	
September	1.4	-0.6	-0.2	
October	-0.8	-1.4	0.2	
November	-0.5	-1.8	(R) -0.5	
December	0.9	-0.9	(P) -1.7	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD FIVE

**Table 7: Passenger Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year
Percent change in the March Passenger TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	100.4	1.3
2002	93.3	-7.1
2003	93.7	0.5
2004	102.2	9.0
2005	108.7	6.4
2006	111.0	2.1
2007	116.5	4.9
2008	117.2	0.6
2009	108.6	-7.3
2010^P	109.5	0.9

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

**Table 8: Combined Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2007-2010
Percent change from previous month**

	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth	2010 % Growth
January	-0.4	1.7	-2.1	(P) 0.6
February	-0.4	-0.9	0.7	(P) -0.1
March	1.9	-1.0	-2.9	(P) 1.1
April	-0.6	0.7	-1.0	
May	0.3	-0.1	-0.4	
June	-1.3	-0.7	0.6	
July	-0.3	0.6	1.7	
August	0.8	-2.0	0.5	
September	-0.4	-1.3	0.0	
October	1.1	-0.8	-0.6	
November	0.3	-2.1	(R) 1.9	
December	0.2	-2.4	(P) -2.1	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD SIX

**Table 9: Combined Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year
Percent change in the March Combined TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	99.6	0.1
2002	97.0	-2.6
2003	100.3	3.4
2004	107.5	7.1
2005	110.7	3.1
2006	110.6	-0.1
2007	111.6	0.9
2008	111.3	-0.2
2009	98.2	-11.8
2010^P	100.4	2.2

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

**Table 10: Freight Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2001-2010
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter**

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar)	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun)	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep)	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec)
	% Growth	% Growth	% Growth	% Growth
2001	1.4	-0.5	-1.4	0.0
2002	1.3	2.8	1.1	1.9
2003	-1.4	0.0	1.3	3.3
2004	1.6	0.5	-0.3	0.8
2005	0.8	-0.7	-0.5	0.7
2006	-0.4	1.1	-0.7	-1.6
2007	0.9	-2.0	-0.6	2.2
2008	0.0	-0.3	-3.0	-5.5
2009	-5.0	-1.3	2.7	(P) -0.4
2010	(P) 1.6			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

- more -

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE
ADD SEVEN

Table 11: Passenger Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2001-2010
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) % Growth	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun) % Growth	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep) % Growth	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec) % Growth
2001	-0.5	-0.1	-21.1	15.2
2002	2.3	1.1	-0.5	4.4
2003	-4.2	-0.1	4.9	2.6
2004	1.4	1.8	0.5	1.9
2005	2.0	0.2	1.5	-1.1
2006	1.5	-0.2	0.3	3.2
2007	1.5	-0.1	2.1	-0.4
2008	-1.0	0.3	-1.8	-4.0
2009	-2.0	0.6	1.1	(P) -2.0
2010	(P) 1.2			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 12: Combined Transportation Services Index Change by Quarter, 2001-2010
Percent change from the last month of the previous quarter

Year	1st Quarter (Jan-Mar) % Growth	2nd Quarter (Apr-Jun) % Growth	3rd Quarter (Jul-Sep) % Growth	4th Quarter (Oct-Dec) % Growth
2001	0.8	-0.3	-7.5	4.0
2002	1.6	2.3	0.6	2.6
2003	-2.2	0.0	2.3	3.1
2004	1.6	0.8	-0.1	1.1
2005	1.1	-0.5	0.0	0.2
2006	0.1	0.7	-0.5	-0.4
2007	1.0	-1.5	0.1	1.6
2008	-0.3	-0.1	-2.7	-5.2
2009	-4.3	-0.8	2.3	(P) -0.8
2010	(P) 1.5			

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

- more -

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INDEX RELEASE

ADD EIGHT

Brief Explanation of the TSI

The Transportation Services Index (TSI) is a measure of the month-to-month changes in the output of services provided by the for-hire transportation industries. The freight index measure changes in freight shipments while the passenger index measures changes in passenger travel.

The TSI tells us how the output of transportation services has increased or decreased from month to month. The index can be examined together with other economic indicators to produce a better understanding of the current and future course of the economy. The movement of the index over time can be compared with other economic measures to understand the relationship of changes in transportation output to changes in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The freight transportation index consists of:

For-hire trucking,

Railroad freight services (including rail based intermodal shipments such as containers on flat cars),

Inland waterways transportation,

Pipeline transportation (including principally petroleum and petroleum products and natural gas), and

Air freight.

The index does not include international or coastal waterborne movements, private trucking, courier services, or the US Postal Service.

The passenger transportation index consists of:

Local transit,

Intercity passenger rail, and

Passenger air transportation.

The index does not include intercity bus, sight seeing services, ferry services, taxi service, private automobile usage, or bicycling and other non-motorized transportation.

- end -