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Contact: Dave Smallen

Tel: 202-366-5568

Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Fell 0.4% in May from April

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) fell 0.4 percent in May from its April level, declining after two consecutive monthly increases, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reported that the Freight TSI has risen 4.4 percent over the last 12 months, starting in June 2009, after declining 15.3 percent in the previous 10 months beginning in August 2008. The index has increased in nine of the last 12 months (Table 2). Through the first five months of 2010, the index declined 1.9 percent with small increases in January, March and April combined with a 3.5 percent decrease in February and the 0.4 percent decrease in May (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 May Freight TSI of 97.7 is a 4.4 percent increase from the recent low of 93.5 reached in May 2009. In May 2009, the index was at its lowest level since June 1997. The Freight TSI is down 13.5 percent from its historic peak of 112.9 reached in May 2006.

Although the index rose 4.4 percent from May 2009 to May 2010, it remains below the level of every other May since 1997 when it was 92.7 (Table 4). March 2010 was the first month since July 2008 in which the Freight TSI exceeded the level of the previous year. The index has exceeded the previous year's level every month since March but still remains below the level of earlier years.

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The freight index is down 12.4 percent in the five years from May 2005. The index is down 1.8 percent in the 10 years from May 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 June index is scheduled for Aug. 11.

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

Transportation Services Index for Passengers

The TSI for passengers rose 1.8 percent in May from its April level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI May 2010 level of 111.3 was 2.3 percent above the May 2009 level after two consecutive May-to-May declines (Table 7). The index is up 2.2 percent in five years and up 10.3 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 0.1 percent in May from its April level (Table 8). The combined TSI May 2010 level of 100.7 was 3.9 percent higher than the May 2009 level (Table 9). The combined index is down 9.0 percent in five years, but is up 0.7 percent in 10 years despite recent declines (Table 5). The combined TSI merges the freight and passenger indexes into a single index.

More on TSI

Note: TSI numbers for January (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The January Freight TSI is 100.4, revised from the 96.6 reported in last month's release. The January Passenger TSI is 110.7, revised from 109.5. The January Combined TSI is 102.6, revised from 99.4. The TSI for February, March, April and May are preliminary.

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>

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

Percent Change by Month

(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
November	98.4	2.8	110.1	-0.5	101.0	1.9
December	99.5	1.2	109.9	-0.1	101.8	0.8
January ^R	100.4	0.9	110.7	0.8	102.6	0.8
February ^P	96.9	-3.5	107.8	-2.6	99.3	-3.3
March ^P	97.8	0.9	109.5	1.6	100.4	1.1
April ^P	98.1	0.3	109.3	-0.2	100.6	0.2
May^P	97.7	-0.4	111.3	1.8	100.7	0.1

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	(R) 0.9
February	-0.3	-0.9	1.0	(P) -3.5
March	1.9	-1.4	-3.6	(P) 0.9
April	-0.7	0.6	-1.8	(P) 0.3
May	-0.4	0.0	-0.1	(P) -0.4
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	2.8	
December	-0.1	-2.8	1.2	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
2001	2.2	-0.3	1.4
2002	3.8	3.5	3.7
2003	-1.9	-5.8	-3.0
2004	1.9	1.7	1.9
2005	0.6	2.1	1.0
2006	1.5	2.2	1.7
2007	-0.2	3.7	0.8
2008	0.5	-0.3	0.3
2009	-6.8	-1.8	-5.6
2010^P	-1.9	1.3	-1.1

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

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

	Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	100.0	0.5
2002	101.1	1.1
2003	102.5	1.4
2004	110.1	7.4
2005	111.5	1.3
2006	112.9	1.2
2007	109.2	-3.3
2008	110.4	1.2
2009	93.5	-15.3
2010^P	97.7	4.4

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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

Since May ...	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to May 2010	Passenger TSI Percent change to May 2010	Combined TSI Percent change to May 2010
2009	1	4.4	2.3	3.9
2008	2	-11.5	-5.7	-10.1
2007	3	-10.5	-6.4	-9.5
2006	4	-13.5	-0.4	-10.4
2005	5	-12.4	2.2	-9.0
2004	6	-11.3	8.7	-6.6
2003	7	-4.8	20.7	1.2
2002	8	-3.4	17.9	1.6
2001	9	-2.3	10.7	0.5
2000	10	-1.8	10.3	0.7

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to May 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	(R) 0.8
February	-0.7	-1.0	-0.4	(P) -2.6
March	2.0	0.2	-0.9	(P) 1.6
April	-0.3	1.1	1.4	(P) -0.2
May	2.4	-0.5	-1.2	(P) 1.8
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	-0.5	
December	0.9	-0.9	-0.1	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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

	Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	100.5	-0.4
2002	94.4	-6.1
2003	92.2	-2.3
2004	102.4	11.1
2005	108.9	6.3
2006	111.7	2.6
2007	118.9	6.4
2008	118.0	-0.8
2009	108.7	-7.8
2010^P	111.3	2.3

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	(R) 0.8
February	-0.4	-0.9	0.7	(P) -3.3
March	1.9	-1.0	-2.9	(P) 1.1
April	-0.6	0.7	-1.0	(P) 0.2
May	0.3	-0.1	-0.4	(P) 0.1
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	1.9	
December	0.2	-2.4	0.8	

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary; R = revised

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

	TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2001	100.2	0.3
2002	99.1	-1.1
2003	99.4	0.4
2004	107.8	8.4
2005	110.6	2.7
2006	112.4	1.6
2007	111.3	-1.0
2008	112.0	0.7
2009	96.9	-13.5
2010^P	100.7	3.9

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

NOTE: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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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.

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