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BTS Data

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Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Fell 1.2% in October from September

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) fell 1.2 percent in October from its September level, declining for the second consecutive month, 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 declined in 11 of the past 15 months and in six of 10 months in 2009 despite the three consecutive monthly increases that began in June (Table 2). It had increased 2.8 percent in between May and August. For additional historical 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 October Freight TSI of 94.5 is a 1.0 percent increase from the recent low of 93.5 reached in May. In May, the index was at its lowest level in more than a decade since June 1997. The Freight TSI is down 16.3 percent from its historic peak of 112.9 reached in May 2006.

The 5.8 percent decline in the first 10 months of 2009 was the largest for the January-to-October period since a 6.0 percent decline for the first 10 months of 2000 (Table 3).

The October Freight TSI of 94.5 is the lowest for October since October 1996 when it was 88.8. The 10.5 percent decline in the Freight TSI from October 2008 to October 2009 was the largest October-to-October decline in the 20 years for which the TSI is calculated (Table 4).

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The freight index is also down 14.2 percent in the five years from October 2004. The index is down 9.3 percent in the 10 years from October 1999 (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 November index is scheduled for Jan. 13, 2009.

BTS has issued a 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 fell 0.1 percent in October from its September level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI October 2009 level of 110.3 was 3.1 percent below the October 2008 level, for the second consecutive October-to-October decrease, marking the first consecutive October-to-October decreases in the 20-year history of the TSI (Table 7). Despite recent declines, the index is up 2.8 percent in five years and 12.4 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 fell 0.9 percent in October from its September level (Table 8). The combined TSI October 2009 level of 98.0 was 8.7 percent lower than the October 2008 level, leaving the index at its lowest October level since 2001 (Table 9). The combined index is down 10.2 percent in five years and down 4.2 percent in 10 years (Table 5).

The combined TSI merges the freight and passenger indexes into a single index.

More on TSI

Note: TSI numbers for June (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The June Freight TSI is 94.1, revised from the 94.0 reported in last month's release. The June Passenger TSI is 109.3, revised from 109.1. The June Combined TSI is 97.4, revised from 97.3. The TSI for July, August, September and October are preliminary.

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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 April 2009

Percent Change by Month

(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
April	93.6	-1.8	110.0	1.4	97.2	-1.0
May	93.5	-0.1	108.7	-1.2	96.9	-0.4
June ^R	94.1	0.6	109.3	0.5	97.4	0.6
July ^P	95.5	1.5	110.4	1.0	98.8	1.4
August ^P	96.2	0.7	111.2	0.8	99.5	0.7
September ^P	95.7	-0.5	110.3	-0.8	98.9	-0.6
October^P	94.5	-1.2	110.3	-0.1	98.0	-0.9

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, 2006-2009
Percent change from previous month

	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth
January	0.3	-0.6	2.3	-2.5
February	-1.4	-0.3	-0.9	1.0
March	0.7	1.9	-1.4	-3.6
April	-0.4	-0.7	0.6	-1.8
May	2.3	-0.4	0.0	-0.1
June	-0.8	-1.0	-0.8	(R) 0.6
July	-0.8	-0.3	0.8	(P) 1.5
August	-2.3	0.7	-2.2	(P) 0.7
September	2.5	-1.0	-1.6	(P) -0.5
October	-1.5	1.7	-0.6	(P) -1.2
November	-1.4	0.6	-2.2	
December	1.3	-0.1	-2.8	

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, 2000-2009

Percent change from December of previous year
December to October

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
2000	-6.0	7.0	-2.0
2001	0.8	-17.4	-4.9
2002	6.2	5.5	6.0
2003	1.5	0.2	1.1
2004	2.0	6.4	3.2
2005	-0.8	1.8	-0.1
2006	-1.6	3.0	-0.4
2007	-0.1	2.7	0.6
2008	-3.8	-3.8	-3.8
2009^P	-5.8	-0.5	-4.5

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

Table 4: Freight Transportation Services Index from Year-to-Year

Percent change in the October Freight TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	98.8	-5.2
2001	98.7	-0.1
2002	103.5	4.9
2003	106.1	2.5
2004	110.1	3.8
2005	110.0	-0.1
2006	109.5	-0.5
2007	109.3	-0.2
2008	105.6	-3.3
2009^P	94.5	-10.5

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 2009 (October to October)**

Since October . . .	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to October 2009	Passenger TSI Percent change to October 2009	Combined TSI Percent change to October 2009
2008	1	-10.5	-3.1	-8.7
2007	2	-13.5	-6.4	-11.8
2006	3	-13.7	-2.1	-10.9
2005	4	-14.1	1.6	-10.5
2004	5	-14.2	2.8	-10.2
2003	6	-11.0	12.4	-5.5
2002	7	-8.7	14.6	-3.3
2001	8	-4.2	32.3	4.2
2000	9	-4.3	8.2	-1.8
1999	10	-9.3	12.4	-4.2

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to October 2009 are all preliminary.

**Table 6: Passenger Transportation Services Index Monthly Changes, 2006-2009
Percent change from previous month**

	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth
January	1.3	0.3	-0.2	-0.7
February	-0.1	-0.7	-1.0	-0.4
March	0.3	2.0	0.2	-0.9
April	0.5	-0.3	1.1	1.4
May	0.2	2.4	-0.5	-1.2
June	-0.9	-2.1	-0.4	(R) 0.5
July	0.2	-0.3	-0.2	(P) 1.0
August	-0.9	1.0	-1.1	(P) 0.8
September	1.1	1.4	-0.6	(P) -0.8
October	1.3	-0.8	-1.4	(P) -0.1
November	0.9	-0.5	-1.8	
December	1.0	0.9	-0.9	

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 October Passenger TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	101.9	3.8
2001	83.3	-18.2
2002	96.2	15.4
2003	98.1	2.0
2004	107.2	9.3
2005	108.6	1.3
2006	112.6	3.7
2007	117.8	4.6
2008	113.8	-3.4
2009^P	110.3	-3.1

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, 2006-2009
Percent change from previous month**

	2006 % Growth	2007 % Growth	2008 % Growth	2009 % Growth
January	0.5	-0.4	1.7	-2.1
February	-1.0	-0.4	-0.9	0.7
March	0.6	1.9	-1.0	-2.9
April	-0.1	-0.6	0.7	-1.0
May	1.7	0.3	-0.1	-0.4
June	-0.8	-1.3	-0.7	(R) 0.6
July	-0.6	-0.3	0.6	(P) 1.4
August	-2.0	0.8	-2.0	(P) 0.7
September	2.2	-0.4	-1.3	(P) -0.6
October	-0.8	1.1	-0.8	(P) -0.9
November	-0.9	0.3	-2.1	
December	1.2	0.2	-2.4	

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 October Combined TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	99.8	-2.4
2001	94.0	-5.8
2002	101.3	7.7
2003	103.7	2.4
2004	109.1	5.3
2005	109.4	0.3
2006	110.0	0.5
2007	111.1	1.0
2008	107.4	-3.4
2009^P	98.0	-8.7

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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