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Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) Rose 1.6 Percent in July from June

The Freight Transportation Services Index (TSI) rose 1.6 percent in July from its June level, the first monthly increase since February and the largest increase since January 2008, 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 nine of the last 12 months, but has remained steady or increased in the last two (Table 2). 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 July Freight TSI of 95.5 is a 1.6 percent increase from the recent low of 94.0 reached in May and June. During those two months, the index was at its lowest level since June 1997. The Freight TSI is down 15.4 percent from its historic peak of 112.9 reached in May 2006.

The 4.8 percent decline in the first seven months of 2009 was the second largest in the last decade, exceeded only by the 5.9 percent decline for the first seven months of 2000 (Table 3).

The July Freight TSI of 95.5 is at its lowest July level since 1997 when it was 94.8. The 13.5 percent decline in the Freight TSI from July 2008 to July 2009 was the largest July-to-July decline in the 20 years for which the TSI is calculated (Table 4).

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The freight index is also down 13.3 percent in the five years from July 2004, the 10th consecutive month in which the index declined for a five-year period. The index is down 6.4 percent in 10 years for the seventh-ever 10-year decline in the 20-year history of TSI data (Table 5). All these 10-year declines took place in first seven months of 2009.

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 August index is scheduled for Oct. 15.

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 rose 1.2 percent in July from its June level (Table 6). The Passenger TSI July 2009 level of 110.4 was 5.9 percent below the July 2008 level, the second largest July-to-July decrease in the 20-year history of the series, exceeded only by the 7.3 percent decrease in 2002 to which the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack contributed (Table 7). Despite recent declines, the index is up 5.9 percent in five years and 15.3 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 1.5 percent in July from its June level (Table 8). The combined TSI July 2009 level of 98.8 was 11.6 percent lower than the July 2008 level, leaving the index at its lowest July level since 1998 (Table 9). The combined index is down 8.8 percent in five years for the eighth five-year decline in the history of the combined index, and is down 1.2 percent in 10 years for the fifth-ever 10-year decline in the index (Table 5). All the five-year and 10-year declines took place consecutively in the past several months.

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

More on TSI

Note: TSI numbers for March (Freight, Passenger and Combined) were revised because of revisions in the output data of the component transportation services. The March Freight TSI is 95.3, revised from the 95.6 reported in last month's release. The March Passenger TSI is 108.6, revised from 108.8. The March Combined TSI is 98.2, revised from 98.5. The TSI for April, May, June and July 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 January 2009

Percent Change by Month

(Seasonally Adjusted, Monthly Average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight		Passenger		Combined	
	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change	Index	Pct. Change
January	97.8	-2.5	110.0	-0.7	100.5	-2.1
February	98.9	1.0	109.5	-0.4	101.2	0.7
March ^R	95.3	-3.6	108.6	-0.9	98.2	-2.9
April ^P	94.6	-0.7	110.3	1.6	98.1	-0.1
May ^P	94.0	-0.6	109.4	-0.9	97.4	-0.7
June ^P	94.0	0.0	109.1	-0.3	97.3	-0.1
July^P	95.5	1.6	110.4	1.2	98.8	1.5

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	(R) -3.6
April	-0.4	-0.7	0.6	(P) -0.7
May	2.3	-0.4	0.0	(P) -0.6
June	-0.8	-1.0	-0.8	(P) 0.0
July	-0.8	-0.3	0.8	(P) 1.6
August	-2.3	0.7	-2.2	
September	2.5	-1.0	-1.6	
October	-1.5	1.7	-0.6	
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 July

Year	Freight	Passenger	Combined
2000	-5.9	5.5	-2.5
2001	0.5	0.6	0.5
2002	5.7	3.2	5.0
2003	-0.6	-0.9	-0.7
2004	2.0	3.4	2.4
2005	-0.3	2.2	0.4
2006	-0.2	1.5	0.2
2007	-1.5	1.2	-0.8
2008	0.5	-0.8	0.2
2009^P	-4.8	-0.3	-3.7

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: P = preliminary

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

Percent change in the July Freight TSI

(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)

	Freight TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	98.8	-3.2
2001	98.3	-0.5
2002	103.0	4.8
2003	103.9	0.9
2004	110.2	6.1
2005	110.6	0.3
2006	111.0	0.4
2007	107.7	-2.9
2008	110.4	2.4
2009^P	95.5	-13.5

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 (July to July)**

Since July . . .	Duration in years	Freight TSI Percent change to July 2009	Passenger TSI Percent change to July 2009	Combined TSI Percent change to July 2009
2008	1	-13.5	-5.9	-11.6
2007	2	-11.3	-4.9	-9.8
2006	3	-14.0	-0.5	-10.8
2005	4	-13.6	1.3	-10.1
2004	5	-13.3	5.9	-8.8
2003	6	-8.1	13.8	-3.0
2002	7	-7.3	17.3	-1.5
2001	8	-2.9	8.8	-0.5
2000	9	-3.3	9.9	-0.5
1999	10	-6.4	15.3	-1.2

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: The percent changes to July 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	(R) -0.9
April	0.5	-0.3	1.1	(P) 1.6
May	0.2	2.4	-0.5	(P) -0.9
June	-0.9	-2.1	-0.4	(P) -0.3
July	0.2	-0.3	-0.2	(P) 1.2
August	-0.9	1.0	-1.1	
September	1.1	1.4	-0.6	
October	1.3	-0.8	-1.4	
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 July Passenger TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	Passenger TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	100.4	4.9
2001	101.5	1.0
2002	94.1	-7.3
2003	97.0	3.1
2004	104.2	7.4
2005	109.0	4.6
2006	111.0	1.9
2007	116.1	4.6
2008	117.3	1.1
2009^P	110.4	-5.9

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, 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	(R) -2.9
April	-0.1	-0.6	0.7	(P) -0.1
May	1.7	0.3	-0.1	(P) -0.7
June	-0.8	-1.3	-0.7	(P) -0.1
July	-0.6	-0.3	0.6	(P) 1.5
August	-2.0	0.8	-2.0	
September	2.2	-0.4	-1.3	
October	-0.8	1.1	-0.8	
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 July Combined TSI
(Monthly average of 2000 = 100)**

	TSI	Percent change from same month previous year
2000	99.3	-0.7
2001	99.3	0.0
2002	100.3	1.0
2003	101.8	1.5
2004	108.4	6.4
2005	109.9	1.4
2006	110.8	0.8
2007	109.5	-1.1
2008	111.8	2.1
2009^P	98.8	-11.6

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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