



In the UK, the industry was and is disturbed by a 1000 day, and now a 900 day, hiatus in new passenger rail car orders.

In the US, we measure this hiatus in decades.

Some of our most recent equipment can attest to this.



Surfliner - Built 2000

Bi-Level



Photo Courtesy Weekend Chief Publishing



Viewliner - Built 1995

Single Level



Photo Courtesy Weekend Chief Publishing

Talgo Series 7 - Built 1997

Trainset



Photo Courtesy Weekend Chief Publishing

RDC (commuter service) - Built 1955

DMU



Photo Courtesy Weekend Chief Publishing



To address this situation, Public law 110-432, The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, required Amtrak to:

... Establish a Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee, comprised of representatives of Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration, host freight railroad companies, passenger railroad equipment manufactures, interested States, and, as appropriate, other passenger railroad operators.

“The purpose of the Committee shall be to design, develop specifications for, and procure standardized next-generation corridor equipment.”



“Functions – the Committee may –

- Determine the number of different types of equipment required, taking into account variations in operational needs and corridor infrastructure.
- Establish a pool of equipment to be used on corridor routes funded by participating states; and
- Subject to agreements between Amtrak and States, utilize services provided by Amtrak to design, maintain, and remanufacture equipment.”



The elected Officers of the Section 305 NGEC Executive Board are:

- Bill Bronte, CALTRANS – Chair
- Mario Bergeron, Amtrak – Vice Chair
- DJ Stadtler, Amtrak – Treasurer
- Alan Ware, Georgia – Secretary (Appointed by the Board to fill the vacancy – Sept. 15, 2011)



At the initial meeting, in January 2010, and in accordance with the By-Laws, the Executive Board established two subcommittees: the Technical subcommittee and the Finance subcommittee; and also established an Administrative task force. The subcommittees and the task force were tasked with constituting themselves, electing officers, and developing work plans and a first year budget. Later, a Locomotive Task Force and two working groups, would be established.



Goals/Deliverables:

- Develop Single Level Specifications
- Finalize Bi-Level Coach Specifications
- Develop Diesel Locomotive Specifications
- Develop Ownership and Organizational Structures
- Develop Procurement Strategies
- Develop Fleet management (pool) Strategies
- Prepare Initial Procurement



Purpose/Responsibilities of Technical Subcommittee:

- Develop and/or evaluate alternative passenger rail car and propulsion technologies and designs
- Evaluate proposed vehicle subsystems
- Establish performance and safety criteria standards, and develop specifications
- Respond to requests made by the Committee or Executive Board to assist in carrying out their duties
- Any such other tasks and duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board



Subjects to be addressed by Technical Subcommittee:

- Safety criteria
- Regulatory compliance requirements/procedures
- Interoperability of car/locomotive/infrastructure requirements
- Performance criteria
- Passenger car interior configurations, including design enhancements to facilitate travel by the disabled and elderly communities
- Passenger amenities
- Motive power



Technical Subcommittee Subjects (Continued):

- Operational issues
- Efficiency of operations
- Economies of scale benefits from common fleets
- Servicing/inspection requirements
- Maintenance and overhaul criteria
- Procurement guidelines
- Inventory criteria for both spare parts as well as vehicle spare margins
- Maintenance facility requirements



General Committee Precepts:

- Provide common vision and direction to manufacturing community
- Comply with all applicable Safety Standards
- Comply with Americans with Disabilities legislation
- Achieve very high Buy America ratio

To actually compose the specifications, a requirements document is first generated



Then, specialist groups comprised of Amtrak, State Representatives, vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, and consultants, many on a volunteer basis, generate state-of-the art language.

Individual groups handle structures, bogies, interiors, electrical, and the like.

The specifications are modified, and finally approved by the Committee and Executive Board.



Much procedural help and guidance is provided by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the US Department of Transportation, and the Federal Railroad Administration, as well as several State Transportation Departments. Amtrak staff serves in many support roles



In record time, the following specifications were completed and approved by the Executive Board.

- Aug. 2010 – Bi-Level Cars
- Jan. 2011 – Single Level Cars
- Mar. 2011 – Diesel Locomotive
- Aug 2011 – Trainsets

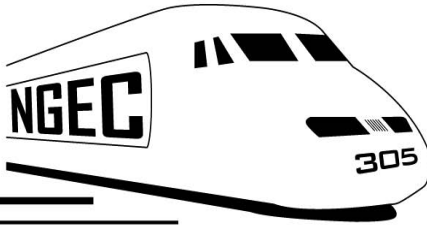
Specifications Currently Underway:

- Dual-Mode Locomotive
- DMU Car



Special research efforts have been undertaken by sub-groups within the Committee. The Locomotive Technology Task Force has done several, among which are:

- Locomotive Vehicle/Technology Overview
- Potential New Locations to Use Dual-Mode Locomotives to Solve Operational Constraints
- Fuel Consumption Analysis (For Varying Maximum Speeds)



Even before the NGENC specifications were done, Amtrak placed its first order in many years, for new single level cars, to replace 63 year old vehicles. And in the regional and commuter market, two agencies have ordered DMU cars of a new design, now under construction



New Stainless Steel North American DMU under Construction
Photo courtesy Nippon Sharyo U.S.A.



Several States are now preparing to go to tender with the new specifications. The first to be ordered are likely to be bi-level cars for corridor services.

The organization of a multi-state pool to manage such a fleet is under consideration. This may be a new company or placed under an existing agency.



The next step is implementation. Any new orders using Federal Funds must utilize the new standardized specifications.

Demand for rail passenger service is rising throughout the nation. The alternatives are clear. Either many hundreds of new vehicles must be ordered, or ...

We are faced with a diminishing fleet that looks like this.



I hope, on behalf of the Next Generation Equipment Committee, that I can invite you to the U.S. around 2015 to see and ride on the fruits of our efforts.

