



Member of the Board

Surface Transportation Board
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

March 29, 2018

Mr. Chris Jahn
President
The Fertilizer Institute
425 Third Street, S.W., Suite 950
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Mr. Jahn:

Thank you for your recent letter on behalf of The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) expressing concerns about rail service challenges across the Class I freight rail network. We appreciate receiving your views.

The Surface Transportation Board (Board) closely monitors freight rail service across the nation's rail system. In recent weeks, the Board has become increasingly concerned about declining service performance across portions of the Class I railroad industry. Although there are exceptions, weekly data from most Class I railroads indicate that certain carriers are experiencing significant service challenges, as your letter also indicates.

On March 16, 2018, the Board requested that all Class I railroads provide their service outlook plans for the near term and for the remainder of 2018. The Board has asked for information about each railroad's network, including locomotive availability, employee resources, local service performance, service demand, communication strategies, and capacity constraints. The carriers have also been asked to respond to concerns that have been raised in letters from two trade associations. The carriers' responses are being posted on the Board's website when they are received so that they can be reviewed by interested stakeholders at the same time the Board is reviewing them. The Board's Rail Customer and Public Assistance (RCPA) staff is also scheduling weekly calls with certain carriers to better understand their service challenges and their plans for improving service.

RCPA is available to assist TFI's members in resolving rail service problems on an informal and confidential basis. We encourage you to refer your members to this office, at 202-245-0238. RCPA's Deputy Director, Michael Higgins, is also available at 202-245-0284 or michael.higgins@stb.gov. Please continue to keep the Board apprised of the concerns of your members.

Sincerely,

Ann Begeman
Chairman

Deb Miller
Vice Chairman