



**2015**  
June

# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION REPORT CARD



**PREPARED FOR:**  
Metra Board of Directors



November 2015

## June 2015 Customer Satisfaction Report Card

Metra set a goal in 2015 to track customer satisfaction annually and better track its performance in delivering reliable and safe transportation that represents a good value to its customers. Overall, the June 2015 survey results are encouraging, reflecting higher satisfaction levels over 2014, when responses were greatly influenced by recent significant fare increases as well as service delays and disruptions during one of the worst winters in recent history.

### Survey Methodology

An internal working team developed a short survey questionnaire that focused on collecting customer responses on key service attributes as well as overall satisfaction with Metra. From late May through June 2015, a total of 4,475 surveys were completed online by Metra passengers. Customers were asked to answer several demographic questions, rate overall satisfaction, rate their satisfaction with 26 unique service attributes, list most important features while traveling, and provide general comments.

Unlike past system-wide customer satisfaction survey sampling plans which recruited participants onboard trains, the 2015 study was conducted entirely online, with respondents recruited via email invitations and a link on Metra's home page of its website, as well as through the customer newsletter. Therefore, results do not reflect a true sampling of the customer base, but rather a segment of interested Metra users who took the time to share their opinions.

These differences are important to keep in mind in that direct comparisons with prior year surveys are not fully possible. Each of the past two surveys have employed different methods: 2014 sought to sample all morning trains by capturing a percent of customers who completed the on-board Origin-Destination Survey; and 2015 necessarily had no assurance that any particular train might have been represented. That said, respondents by rail line tracked favorably to actual system wide usage patterns and past customer surveys.

Table 1: Distribution of Survey Responses

| Rail Line                       | 2014<br>On/Off<br>Count | 2014<br>Customer<br>Survey | 2015<br>Customer<br>Survey |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Metra Electric District (MED)   | 11.6%                   | 7.8%                       | 9.7%                       |
| Rock Island District (RI)       | 10.5%                   | 8.1%                       | 9.1%                       |
| SouthWest Service (SWS)         | 3.5%                    | 3.7%                       | 3.4%                       |
| Heritage Corridor (HC)          | 1.0%                    | 1.5%                       | 2.0%                       |
| BNSF                            | 21.0%                   | 22.6%                      | 17.9%                      |
| Union Pacific West (UP-W)       | 10.2%                   | 9.9%                       | 9.9%                       |
| Milwaukee District West (MD-W)  | 7.6%                    | 8.6%                       | 9.2%                       |
| Union Pacific Northwest (UP-NW) | 13.6%                   | 16.2%                      | 15.3%                      |
| Milwaukee District North (MD-N) | 8.2%                    | 8.5%                       | 10.3%                      |
| North Center Service (NCS)      | 2.5%                    | 3.0%                       | 2.7%                       |
| Union Pacific North (UP-N)      | 10.5%                   | 10.0%                      | 10.4%                      |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>100%</b>             | <b>100%</b>                | <b>100%</b>                |

## Overall Customer Satisfaction

A rating scale from 1-Very Dissatisfied to 10-Very Satisfied was used. Ratings between 6 and 10 are considered “Satisfied.” In June 2015, the riders surveyed were more satisfied than in the spring of 2014 when asked “How satisfied are you with Metra overall?”

Table 2: Overall Percent Satisfied with Metra Service

| 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>73%</b>     | <b>81%</b>   | <b>+8%</b>    |

Less frequent riders tended to report greater overall satisfaction with Metra.

- Nearly 92% satisfaction for those taking 1-9 trips monthly.
- Nearly 80 percent satisfaction for those taking 10-39 trips monthly.
- Those making 40 or more trips per month reported the lowest level of satisfaction (76%).

Table 3: Overall Percent Satisfied by Frequency of Use in a Month

| Frequency of Use in a Month            | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| I do not ride Metra in a typical month |                | 90%          |               |
| 1-2 trips                              | 89%*           | 92%          | +1-3%         |
| 3-4 trips                              |                | 91%          |               |
| 5-9 trips                              |                | 91%          |               |
| 10-19 trips**                          | 76%            | 79%          | +3%           |
| 20-29 trips**                          | 75%            | 79%          | +4%           |
| 30-39 trips**                          | 76%            | 80%          | +4%           |
| 40 or more trips                       | 72%            | 76%          | +4%           |
| <b>All Frequencies of Use</b>          | <b>73%</b>     | <b>81%</b>   | <b>+8%</b>    |

\*In 2014, fewer categories were used in the survey.

\*\*In 2014, the categories were slightly different (11-20 trips, 21-30 trips, and 31-39 trips).

Eight of 11 rail lines had more favorable satisfaction ratings in 2015 compared to 2014. In all, 81 percent of customers were satisfied in 2015, up 8 points from 73 percent in 2014.

- Milwaukee District North had 2% less satisfaction (83% from 85%).
- With service limited to three inbound and three outbound trains on weekdays only, not surprisingly, Heritage Corridor was lowest of all rail lines.

Table 4: Overall Percent Satisfied by Line

| Line             | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| MED              | 87%            | 86%          | -1%           |
| RI               | 81%            | 86%          | +5%           |
| SWS              | 64%            | 68%          | +4%           |
| HC*              | 62%            | 60%          | -2%           |
| BNSF             | 59%            | 74%          | +15%          |
| UP-W             | 77%            | 82%          | +5%           |
| MD-W             | 79%            | 81%          | +2%           |
| UP-NW            | 70%            | 85%          | +15%          |
| MD-N             | 85%            | 83%          | -2%           |
| NCS              | 64%            | 73%          | +9%           |
| UP-N             | 84%            | 89%          | +5%           |
| <b>All Lines</b> | <b>73%</b>     | <b>81%</b>   | <b>+8%</b>    |

\*Small differences in HC percentages are likely not significant, due to small numbers of survey responses.

### Customer Satisfaction by Service Attribute

When asked to think about the last few trips taken on Metra and rate satisfaction with 26 service attributes, the riders surveyed expressed higher satisfaction levels in June 2015 than in the spring of 2014. Safety and security related attributes have consistently rated the highest over the last five years but are trending slightly lower. The number of scheduled trains in non-rush hours, onboard communication during service delays, and announcement of delays at stations were the attributes with the lowest satisfaction.

The riders surveyed reported lower satisfaction with communications during service disruptions than other, more routine, communications. Several enhancements to Metra's passenger communications, most notably customized alerts via "My Metra" along with web postings of real-time schedules (implemented at about the same time as the 2014 survey) may have driven better ratings across all attributes in this category.

Table 5: Customer Satisfaction by Service Attribute

| Service Attribute                                |                                                        | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Service<br>Availa-<br>bility &<br>Quality        | Getting to Destination on time                         | 71%            | 80%          | +9%           |
|                                                  | The number of scheduled trains in rush hour            | 75%            | 78%          | +3%           |
|                                                  | <b>The number of scheduled trains in non-rush hour</b> | <b>54%</b>     | <b>58%</b>   | <b>+4%</b>    |
|                                                  | Total travel time for your trip                        | 75%            | 76%          | +1%           |
| Safety &<br>Security                             | <b>How safely the train is operated</b>                | <b>95%</b>     | <b>93%</b>   | <b>-2%</b>    |
|                                                  | <b>Personal safety onboard the train</b>               | <b>94%</b>     | <b>93%</b>   | <b>-1%</b>    |
|                                                  | <b>Personal safety at boarding station</b>             | <b>92%</b>     | <b>89%</b>   | <b>-3%</b>    |
|                                                  | <b>Personal safety at destination station</b>          | <b>92%</b>     | <b>89%</b>   | <b>-3%</b>    |
| Communi-<br>cations &<br>Information             | Clarity of signage at station                          | 83%            | 82%          | -1%           |
|                                                  | <b>Notification of service changes</b>                 | <b>59%</b>     | <b>67%</b>   | <b>+8%</b>    |
|                                                  | Onboard announcement of stations while riding          | 72%            | 75%          | +3%           |
|                                                  | <b>Onboard communications during service delays</b>    | <b>57%</b>     | <b>61%</b>   | <b>+4%</b>    |
| Cleanliness<br>&<br>Comfort                      | <b>Announcement of delays at station</b>               | <b>54%</b>     | <b>59%</b>   | <b>+5%</b>    |
|                                                  | Cleanliness of boarding station                        | 79%            | 82%          | +3%           |
|                                                  | Cleanliness of destination station                     | 76%            | 78%          | +2%           |
|                                                  | Cleanliness onboard train                              | 77%            | 78%          | +1%           |
|                                                  | Comfortable temperature on train                       | 72%            | 75%          | +3%           |
|                                                  | Availability of seats on train                         | 76%            | 80%          | +4%           |
| Courtesy &<br>Knowledge<br>of Metra<br>Personnel | Comfort while waiting at station                       | 73%            | 71%          | -2%           |
|                                                  | Onboard personnel knowledge of system to assist me     | 87%            | 88%          | +1%           |
|                                                  | Station personnel knowledge of system to assist me     | 84%            | 85%          | +1%           |
|                                                  | Station personnel courtesy at station                  | 83%            | 83%          | -             |
| Parking<br>Availa-<br>bility<br>& Cost           | Onboard personnel courtesy                             | 85%            | 86%          | +1%           |
|                                                  | Availability of parking at the boarding station        | 69%            | 77%          | +8%           |
| Value                                            | Cost of parking at boarding station                    | n/a            | 69%          | -             |
|                                                  | Value of service for fare paid                         | 71%            | 71%          | -             |

Note: Highest four of the 26 attributes are in black **bold font** for each year. The lowest four are in **red bold** font for each year.

### Order of Importance of 26 Attributes

Riders were asked to select the three most important attributes from the list 26 service attributes rated. "Getting to destination on time", "Value of service for fare paid" and "How safely the train is operated" were cited (in that order) most frequently, followed closely by "Total travel time." The three attributes cited least often are "Station personnel knowledge," "Station personnel courtesy at station," and "Cleanliness of destination station." Of significance is the difference between the most frequently cited attribute of "Getting to destination on time" with 2,249 responses and the second through fourth most cited attributes. After these, the frequency of citing among the top three attributes of greatest importance falls off dramatically. As attributes of greatest importance, these service features warrant Metra's continued improvement efforts.

Table 6: Order of Importance of Attributes

| System Attribute                                   | % of Respondents that Selected |     |      |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|------|
|                                                    | Responses                      |     | Rank |
| Getting to destination on time                     | 2,249                          | 50% | 1    |
| Value of service for fare paid                     | 1,374                          | 31% | 2    |
| How safely the train is operated                   | 1,317                          | 29% | 3    |
| Total travel time for your trip                    | 1,234                          | 28% | 4    |
| Availability of seats on train                     | 925                            | 21% | 5    |
| Personal safety onboard the train                  | 769                            | 17% | 6    |
| The number of scheduled trains in rush hour        | 726                            | 16% | 7    |
| The number of scheduled trains in non-rush hour    | 563                            | 13% | 8    |
| Cleanliness onboard train                          | 522                            | 12% | 9    |
| Onboard communications during service delays       | 490                            | 11% | 10   |
| Comfortable temperature on train                   | 475                            | 11% | 11   |
| Announcements of delays at station                 | 439                            | 10% | 12   |
| Notification of service changes                    | 424                            | 9%  | 13   |
| Availability of parking at the boarding station    | 389                            | 9%  | 14   |
| Personal safety at boarding station                | 346                            | 8%  | 15   |
| Personal safety at destination station             | 234                            | 5%  | 16   |
| Onboard personnel courtesy                         | 205                            | 5%  | 17   |
| Onboard announcement of stations while riding      | 152                            | 3%  | 18   |
| Cost of parking at boarding station                | 148                            | 3%  | 19   |
| Comfort while waiting at station                   | 135                            | 3%  | 20   |
| Clarity of signage                                 | 101                            | 2%  | 21   |
| Cleanliness of boarding station                    | 88                             | 2%  | 22   |
| Onboard personnel knowledge of system to assist me | 56                             | 1%  | 23   |
| Cleanliness of destination station                 | 44                             | 1%  | 24   |
| Station personnel courtesy at station              | 36                             | 1%  | 25   |
| Station personnel knowledge of system to assist me | 35                             | 1%  | 26   |
| <b>Total Responses</b>                             | <b>13,476</b>                  |     |      |

### Detail of Top Three Attributes

In looking at satisfaction incrementally, we find a shift within “satisfied” with the percent of respondents rating their level as “Very Satisfied” (9 or 10 on the 10-point scale) higher when compared to prior years. In fact, the percent of “Very Satisfied” is higher for all 26 attributes in 2014. Following are four tables of the top three attributes along with Metra Overall.

Table 7: Getting To Destination On Time

| Survey Year | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2015        | 7%                | 13%          | 31%       | 49%            |
| 2014        | 12%               | 17%          | 39%       | 32%            |

Table 8: Value of Service For Fare Paid

| Survey Year | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2015        | 8%                | 20%          | 43%       | 28%            |
| 2014        | 8%                | 21%          | 46%       | 25%            |

Table 9: How Safely the Train Is Operated

| Survey Year | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2015        | 1%                | 6%           | 24%       | 69%            |
| 2014        | 1%                | 4%           | 40%       | 55%            |

Table 10: Metra Overall

| Survey Year | Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |
|-------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 2015        | 5%                | 14%          | 50%       | 31%            |
| 2014        | 6%                | 19%          | 52%       | 22%            |

### Satisfaction with Getting to Destination on Time

Nearly half of all riders surveyed for the June 2015 survey selected “Getting to Destination on Time” as one of the most important service attributes.

- All rail lines scored higher in 2015, except Milwaukee District North and SouthWest Service which were stable. Greatest improvement was noted with BNSF, which increased to 69% from the 43% reported in 2014.
- Metra Electric received highest ratings at 91% satisfied, followed by Rock Island at 90% and Union Pacific North at 89%.

Table 11: Percent Satisfied with Getting to Destination on Time by Line

| Line             | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| MED              | 89%            | 91%          | +2%           |
| RI               | 82%            | 90%          | +8%           |
| SWS              | 56%            | 57%          | +1%           |
| HC*              | 47%            | 51%          | +4%           |
| BNSF             | 43%            | 69%          | +26%          |
| UP-W             | 78%            | 80%          | +2%           |
| MD-W             | 80%            | 79%          | -1%           |
| UP-NW            | 72%            | 84%          | +12%          |
| MD-N             | 80%            | 80%          | -             |
| NCS              | 60%            | 71%          | +11%          |
| UP-N             | 85%            | 89%          | +4%           |
| <b>All Lines</b> | <b>71%</b>     | <b>80%</b>   | <b>+9%</b>    |

\*Small differences in HC percentages are likely not significant, due to small numbers of survey responses.

Respondents commuting to school and work reported lower levels of satisfaction with getting to destination on time than those traveling for recreational or other personal purposes. However, the level of satisfaction for work and school trips is up considerably since the spring of 2014.

Table 12: Percent Satisfied with Getting to Destination on Time by Trip Purpose

| Trip Purpose                        | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Commute to/from school              | 67%            | 77%          | +10%          |
| Commute to/from work                | 70%            | 76%          | +6%           |
| Business related to work            | 89%            | 86%          | -3%           |
| Personal business                   | 91%            | 87%          | -4%           |
| Entertainment, visiting, recreation | 100%           | 91%          | -9%           |
| Medical/dental appointment          | 100%           | 100%         | -             |
| Shopping                            | n/a            | 94%          | -             |
| Other (please specify)              | 86%            | 92%          | +6%           |
| <b>All Trip Purposes</b>            | <b>71%</b>     | <b>80%</b>   | <b>+9%</b>    |

### Satisfaction with Value of Service for Fare Paid

The satisfaction with value of service for fare paid varies depending on the type of ticket used by the riders surveyed.

- Those using One-Way tickets and Weekend Passes reported higher satisfaction with Value of Service for Fare Paid (One-way, 81% satisfied; Weekend Pass, 86% satisfied).
- Monthly Pass holders reported least satisfaction at 66%.
- Ten-Ride Ticket users reported only slightly better at 72%.

Table 13: Percent Satisfied with Value of Service for Fare Paid

| Ticket Type             | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June | Diff<br>14-15 |
|-------------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Monthly Pass            | 72%            | 66%          | -6%           |
| Ten-Ride                | 68%            | 72%          | +4%           |
| One-way                 | 74%            | 81%          | +7%           |
| Weekend Pass            | 81%            | 86%          | +5%           |
| Other (please specify)  | n/a            | 90%          | -             |
| <b>All Ticket Types</b> | <b>71%</b>     | <b>71%</b>   | <b>-</b>      |

### Demographics of Survey Respondents

Among survey respondents, 52% are female, and 74% of total respondents are in their prime working years of 35-64 years old. Those under age 25 comprised only 2% of total respondents. Those 65 and older accounted for 12% of survey respondents. The 2014, and earlier, customer satisfaction surveys specifically recruited respondents from on-board weekday morning trains, so their ridership usage patterns were dominated by Metra's weekday work trip market. On the other hand, the June 2015 customer satisfaction survey, by recruiting exclusively on-line, captured a broader customer base in terms of trip purpose than past surveys.

- 72% of the participants reported their trip purpose as commuting (work or school) compared to 93% in 2014.
- 16% travelled for entertainment, visiting, and recreational purposes compared to 1% in 2014.

Table 14: Primary Trip Purpose Percent of Surveys

| Trip Purpose                        | 2014<br>Spring | 2015<br>June |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Commute to/from work                | 90%            | 71%          |
| Commute to/from school              | 3%             | 1%           |
| Business related to work            | 2%             | 3%           |
| Personal business                   | 2%             | 5%           |
| Medical/dental appointment          | 1%             | 1%           |
| Entertainment, visiting, recreation | 1%             | 16%          |
| Shopping                            | <1%            | 1%           |
| Other (please specify)              | 2%             | 2%           |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>100%</b>    | <b>100%</b>  |

Respondents who were commuting to work most often used monthly tickets (71%), followed by ten-ride tickets (26%); those traveling to school, however, most often used ten-ride tickets (67%), with 18% having used a monthly pass.

Table 15: Percent of Ticket Types Used by Riders Surveyed by Trip Purpose

| Trip Purpose                        | Monthly Pass | Ten-Ride   | One-way    | Weekend Pass | Other     | Total       |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Commute to/from work                | 71%          | 26%        | 3%         | 0%           | 1%        | 100%        |
| Commute to/from school              | 18%          | 67%        | 10%        | 5%           | 0%        | 100%        |
| Business related to work            | 8%           | 41%        | 44%        | 3%           | 3%        | 100%        |
| Personal business                   | 2%           | 29%        | 43%        | 17%          | 10%       | 100%        |
| Medical/dental appointment          | 2%           | 29%        | 45%        | 0%           | 24%       | 100%        |
| Entertainment, visiting, recreation | 1%           | 22%        | 37%        | 31%          | 9%        | 100%        |
| Shopping                            | 0%           | 22%        | 35%        | 38%          | 5%        | 100%        |
| Other (please specify)              | 4%           | 25%        | 37%        | 16%          | 17%       | 100%        |
| <b>All Trip Purposes</b>            | <b>51%</b>   | <b>26%</b> | <b>13%</b> | <b>7%</b>    | <b>3%</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The survey did capture Metra's broad customer base, but due to the respondent recruitment method, it did not generate much response from new riders. Of the more than 4,700 respondents, only 120 (less than 3%) were new passengers, (customers for less than one year). In 2014, 13% of the respondents had been riding less than a year.

Table 16: Metra Ridership Duration Percent of Surveys

| Metra Ridership Duration           | 2014 Spring | 2015 June   |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Less than 6 months                 | 5%          | 1%          |
| 6 months to 1 year                 | 8%          | 2%          |
| 1 to 2 years                       | 11%         | 6%          |
| 3 to 6 years                       | 21%         | 18%         |
| 7 to 10 years                      | 15%         | 16%         |
| 11 to 20 years                     | 19%         | 22%         |
| More than 20 years                 | 19%         | 29%         |
| I am not a regular Metra passenger | 3%          | 7%          |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>100%</b> | <b>100%</b> |