



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of January 5, 2023

Correspondence as of December 23, 2022

Subject

- 1 Caltrain Car Questions
- 2 Single Tracking Schedule
- 3 System Improvement

From: Board (@caltrain.com)
To: Nabong, Sarah
Subject: RE: Caltrain questions

From: Nabong, Sarah <nabongs@samtrans.com>
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2022 1:09 PM
To: cwallen416@gmail.com
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>
Subject: RE: Caltrain questions

Dear Cole Allen,

Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The Board members will receive a copy of our correspondence.

We appreciate you taking the time to reach out to Caltrain with your questions. In regards to your first question, yes, the 924 and 925 are currently being mid-life overhauled, the 924 is scheduled to return this month and the 926 will be leaving for mid-life overhaul when the 924 returns. Concerning MP36 locomotives, yes, we have a plan to overhaul the Bombardier cars. Lastly, yes, we are aware of Metra and the similarities we have in regards to equipment. Are Caltrain and Metra friends, or do you guys have a relationship with Metra? We are friends with all of our commuter partners and we have high regards and respect for Metra and the service they provide but we have no relationship.

We hope that answers your questions, and thank you for your interest in Caltrain.

Kindest regards,
Sarah Nabong

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2
1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070
Phone: 650.508.7925
Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



From: Cole Allen <cwallen416@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 4:10 AM
To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>
Subject: Caltrain questions

You don't often get email from cwallen416@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Cole Allen, and I have three questions I'd like to ask Caltrain.

First off, I understand that Caltrain's six MP36PH-3C locomotives are undergoing mid-life overhaul, but so far, only one (No. 927) appears to be done/repainted. Are the other MP36 locomotives in the shops or being rebuilt as we speak?

Number 2 - Seeing as how the Bombardier bi-level cars are now 20 years old.....I understand that Caltrain plans to keep a handful of diesel locomotives and existing passenger cars for service to/from Gilroy. Considering that the Bombardier cars are more accessible and younger than the gallery cars, does Caltrain have a plan to overhaul/rebuild those cars? (including the ex-Metrolink Bombardier cars)

Number 3 -

I was born in San Francisco and grew up in Northern California, but I now live in Chicago. As it is, Chicago has a commuter rail system that is VERY similar to Caltrain, known as Metra, which operates commuter rail service in the exact same way as Caltrain (at least currently). There are obvious differences, but Caltrain and Metra have a ton of similarities in physical appearance. They both use F40PH and MP36PH locomotives as well as gallery cars of the same model with red lines on the noses and cab cars, and most train cars have the exact same body with stainless steel physical appearance as well as the interior. Plus, Caltrain and Metra both have the same door closing chime and message "Caution, the doors are about to close", except on Caltrain, it's a female voice, while on Metra it's male. One of Metra's routes is already electric! Attached is a photo of both trains compared to each other.

I am really curious to know - WHY do Caltrain and Metra have all those similarities in physical appearance. Is Caltrain aware of Metra's existence in Chicago? Are Caltrain and Metra friends, or do you guys have a relationship with Metra?

Best,
CA

From: Nabong, Sarah <nabongs@samtrans.com>
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2022 2:33 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>
Subject: Caltrain Customer Service Recording Form: 870366

Dear [REDACTED],

Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The Board members will receive a copy of our correspondence.

Thank you for notifying us about our temporary Caltrain schedule. I was informed that the current temporary construction schedule takes the planned single-tracking into account. However, due to other construction projects and incidents that may occur along the corridor, delays may impact travel. On a monthly basis, our staff reviews delay reports for opportunities to improve.

We apologize for the inconvenience this has caused, and we appreciate your feedback.

Kind regards,
Sarah Nabong

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, December 5, 2022 9:06 AM
To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>
Subject: Single tracking schedule

Hello,

For the next two weeks, single tracking is adding 5-10 minutes to arrival times. Why does the temporary schedule not include that delay?

You are already creating a temporary schedule so you should add the single tracking delay. Someone at your organization knows when single tracking happens, so delays should be included on the schedule.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: Nabong, Sarah
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2022 2:48 PM
To: 'balazs@ccrma.Stanford.EDU' <balazs@ccrma.Stanford.EDU>
Subject: RE: Subject: how can we make this system better?

Dear Balazs Ivanyi,

Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors was referred to me for response. The Board members will receive a copy of our correspondence.

I have been reassured by Operations that before doors are closed on Caltrain, the assistant conductor is supposed to step down from the train to verify that all passengers have boarded and that the doorways are clear. Once this is verified, the assistant conductor signals to the lead conductor it is clear. The conductor then checks his end of the train before closing all the doors with one step. Please know that Management received your feedback and employees have been reminded about the importance of ensuring all passengers are clear before closing the doors. We normally suggest passengers arrive at the station at least 5 to 10 minutes prior to the train's departure time to avoid situations like this. Our records show that train #526 departed -5 minutes late from 22nd St Station on 12/9/22.

We do apologize for the inconvenience and hope that your future travels with Caltrain are uneventful.

Kind regards,
Sarah Nabong

Sarah Nabong, Customer Service Representative 2

1250 San Carlos Ave San Carlos, CA 94070

Phone: 650.508.7925

Websites: [Caltrain](#) | [SamTrans](#) | [TA](#)



-----Original Message-----

From: balazs@ccrma.Stanford.EDU <balazs@ccrma.Stanford.EDU>
Sent: Friday, December 9, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>
Subject: how can we make this system better?

Dear Board,

I'm reaching out to you to let you know about an incident which happened this morning: 9:16, 12.09.2022. I was biking to the 22nd Street Caltrain station, as I usually do every morning to take the train departing at 9:19 to Palo Alto. This time I was slightly delayed, however I was certain that I could make it before the train leaves. As I arrived to the station at 9:15, the train was already there, thus I rushed down with my bike on the stairs to do my best to catch it. So did multiple other people, right in front of me, as the train arrived earlier than usual.

There were two people directly in front of me queuing up to board the train. They still managed to succeed, which gave me confidence that I'm gonna board the train too. However, right before I could step on the train (as the last passenger to board) the conductor decided to close the doors right in front of my face.

I appreciate that there's a tight schedule and it's complicated to balance such a delicate system properly. Nonetheless, I find it hard to believe that those 15 seconds would matter while I could've jumped on the train, especially if it is early by 3-4 minutes.

I want to make it clear that this message shouldn't come through as an angry complaint, I just simply want to raise awareness to the situation itself. Neither would it be fair from my perspective to point out individual responsibilities, rather I feel the need to point out the faulty apparatus of Caltrain on a system-level.

My main motivation here is to prevent this situation happening again, so other passengers wouldn't experience it in the future. As a systems designer myself, I'm well aware that this isn't an easy task by any means, but hopefully emails like this could help to start some changes.

I'm interested in hearing your thoughts, and please feel free to reach out if you want to take this conversation further. Have a great day!

Best regards,
Balazs Ivanyi