



Amtrak has made progress bringing stations into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but faces challenges in completing work by its target date

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WASHINGTON – Amtrak has brought 117 of 385 stations into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act as of July 2023, but it would have to significantly increase its current pace to complete the remaining stations by its target completion date of fiscal year 2029, an Amtrak Office of Inspector General Report released today said.

The report credits Amtrak for making progress toward achieving ADA compliance at stations where it has sole or shared responsibilities, but some challenges the OIG identified in prior reports persist.

For example, the company increased its ADA staffing by nine full-time employees and 33 contractor positions in response to a 2021 OIG report that recommended Amtrak develop, document, and implement a plan to assess the current and future resources the ADA program needed to implement its timeline for compliance and identify actions to address any shortfalls. Program officials told the OIG that the staffing increases have been instrumental in improving its completion rate for ADA projects. Bringing the remaining 268 stations into compliance by fiscal year 2029, however, will require Amtrak to more than double its current pace, the OIG reported.

According to the report, Amtrak’s greatest challenge is coordinating with third parties at stations where it has shared responsibilities. Third parties include other stations owners—such as state and local governments—as well as historic preservation offices, environmental regulators, utilities, labor unions, and others whose property or legal interest may be affected by the proposed work, such as host railroads. At most stations, Amtrak must seek approval from a mix of these third parties before beginning construction.

Amtrak officials told the OIG that the company has not experienced significant stalemates with third parties that required escalation to its ADA Executive Oversight Committee. Coordinating with third parties is inherently time-consuming, however, because of the complex, sometimes overlapping relationships at some stations and the significant number of locations where this complexity occurs, the report said.

The OIG did not make recommendations in this report, noting that Amtrak had implemented its recommendations from prior reports and was actively working to address other challenges the OIG identified.

More information is included in the full report, which can be downloaded on the OIG’s website: <https://direc.to/jKfA>.

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