



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

Headquarters

East Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor – TCR  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

June 12, 2014



Re: FTA Complaint No. 14-0087

Dear 

This letter responds to your complaint filed against the Regional Transportation Authority/Metra. The FTA Office of Civil Rights is responsible for ensuring that providers of public transportation comply with the ADA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) implementing regulations at 49 CFR Parts 27, 37, 38, and 39.

In the FTA complaint investigation process, we analyze allegations for possible ADA deficiencies by the transit provider. If deficiencies are identified, they are presented to the transit provider and assistance is offered to correct them within a predetermined timeframe. If FTA cannot resolve apparent violations of the ADA or the DOT ADA regulations by voluntary means, formal enforcement proceedings may be initiated against the public transportation provider, which may result in the suspension or termination of Federal funds. FTA also may refer the matter to the U.S. Department of Justice for enforcement.

FTA investigated your allegations and sent an information request to Metra. We received a written response from Metra dated May 29, 2014, that addressed your allegations and provided relevant information. Your allegations are addressed below.

### **Allegations**

Your complaint raised the following general allegations on behalf of people with hearing impairments:

- You rode the Union Pacific Railroad North line between Ogilvie Transportation Center and Highwood on December 22 and 23, 2013, at approximately 7:00 p.m. As the trains pulled into 17 stations on both evenings, the station platforms were dark. On both evenings, you were seated on the left side of the train in the direction of travel, and none of the stations passed had station name signs that were clearly visible from the train. The

stations passed were Clybourn, Ravenswood, Rogers Park, Evanston Main Street, Evanston Davis Street, Evanston Central Street, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Indian Hill, Winnetka, Hubbard Woods, Glencoe, Braeside, Ravinia Park, Rivinia, Highland Park, and Highwood.

### **Relevant ADA Requirements**

Section 810.6.3 of the DOT accessibility standards, as incorporated into DOT ADA regulations

### **Metra's Response**

Metra reported that, as part of its investigation of your complaint, its engineering staff replicated your trip after dark on the Union Pacific North Line from Ogilvie Transportation Center to Highwood Station to evaluate the lighting and signage conditions at each inbound and outbound stop. In its response, Metra agreed to address the specific station name signage and lighting issues detailed therein for each of the 17 stations at issue in your complaint by the end of October 2014; relocate station name signs not currently located beneath lights to locations beneath lights; clean or replace signs that have been defaced by graffiti; and to replace missing signs or those faded by ultraviolet light.

Metra's response noted that it has reported the platform lighting issues to (and discussed them with) Union Pacific staff for maintenance and repair, since Union Pacific operates the commuter rail service and maintains platform lighting at the stations. Metra stated that it will review its processes for checking station lighting and for ensuring that maintenance on all Metra lines occurs "within a regular, scheduled time frame." Metra also committed to forward your complaint to the appropriate staff involved in improvements currently under construction at the Ravenswood station to ensure these "concerns are addressed at the Ravenswood station during the remainder of construction and also upon project completion."

The response stated that Metra's accessible rail cars are "equipped with audio announcements paired with LED visual announcement signs that also help commuters identify station stops while aboard the train." According to the response, Union Pacific reported that on the nights in question, four of six rail cars on the trains were accessible cars.

Metra also mentioned its plans for a future full-time hire whose responsibilities will include regularly assessing similar conditions at stations systemwide and to evaluate a sign replacement program during its upcoming 2015–2019 capital programming process.

### **Conclusion**

FTA has reviewed Metra's response and found it responsive to your allegations. By copying Metra on this letter, we request that Metra provide confirmation to us by October 31, 2014, that the changes in its plan have been made.

The investigative portion of our processing of this complaint has concluded. Accordingly, we are closing your complaint as of the date of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact Susan Clark at (202) 366-4018 or via e-mail at [FTA.ADAAssistance@dot.gov](mailto:FTA.ADAAssistance@dot.gov). Any further correspondence should reference FTA Complaint No. 14-0087. Thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Sweet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dawn Sweet  
Acting Team Leader  
Office of Civil Rights

cc: FTA Region 5  
Metra (Complainant name redacted)