

**HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS** For the period from

**VIA Rail Network** | Ridership: 274,462 passengers Departures: 1,195 trains Ridership increase comp

**Québec City-Montreal-Ottawa-Toronto Route** 4% compared to 2012-2013

MONTREAL, Jan. 10, 2014 /CNW Telbec/ - More than 274,000 passengers trusted VIA Rail for travel within Canada over the Holidays, from December 18, 2013 to January 7, 2014.

"The train was the preferred means of travel for many Canadians over the Holidays thanks to its comfort and the reliability of its service despite the winter conditions. This year, even more Canadians trusted VIA Rail to get them to their Holiday destinations. The total number of passengers increased by 9.5% compared to last year," affirmed Sylvie Bourget, VIA Rail's Chief Marketing and Sales Officer.

"The Holidays are the busiest time of the year for VIA Rail and its success is the result of our employees' dedication and professionalism."

### More Holiday Highlights

Over the Holidays, hundreds of employees were working on board our trains, in our train stations, at our maintenance centers and at VIA Rail's headquarters in order to ensure the reliability of our operations.

The Montréal-Toronto line was the most popular route on the network this season, serving 61,163 passengers. The line between Toronto and Windsor saw a ridership increase of 24%, which represents the largest increase on any route when comparing ridership to last year's Holiday season.

In the Québec City-Windsor corridor, Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> was the busiest day with 15,700 passengers travelling on board our trains, generating over \$1 million of ticket sale revenues.

On the long-hauls, the *Ocean* service, which travels between Montréal and Halifax, welcomed more than 7,500 passengers over the Holiday season. Meanwhile, the *Canadian*, which connects Toronto to Vancouver, saw close to 6,700 passengers on board.

The uncommonly harsh winter weather seen across the country over the Holidays caused several delays. Nevertheless, all passengers who booked travel through VIA Rail reached their destinations safely.

## Passengers Like to Stay Connected

Thanks to its world-class on board Wi-Fi service offered throughout the Québec City - Windsor corridor as well as on the eastern long-haul train, the *Ocean*, VIA Rail allows its passengers to stay connected and online throughout their journey. Over the Holidays, over 144,000 devices connected to VIA Rail's Wi-Fi system and transmitted approximately 6,740GB of information through the web, which is the equivalent of 6.9 million emails.

In the spirit of the Holidays, all Canadians were invited to participate in VIA Rail's "Sound the

Written by Australian Business

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Horn" contest. Participants were encouraged to sound a train whistle and then enter the contest to win travel credits for use across our network. This year, from among the 25,540 participants, seven lucky winners were awarded travel credits that ranged in value from \$250 - \$2,500!

**About VIA Rail Canada** As Canada's national rail passenger service, VIA Rail Canada's mandate is to provide safe, efficient and economical passenger transportation service, in both official languages of our country. VIA operates intercity, regional and transcontinental trains linking 450 communities across its 12,500-kilometre route network. Recipient of the Railway Association of Canada's Safety Award in 2012 for the 11<sup>th</sup>

time in 12 years, and of the 2013 Agent's Choice Award voted by Canadian travel agents and presented by Baxter Travel Media, VIA Rail safely transports nearly four million passengers annually. Since 2007, the Government of Canada

has invested more than a billion dollars in VIA Rail. Follow the progress of our transformation at

[viarail.ca/transformingvia](http://viarail.ca/transformingvia)

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