

PROGRAM PLAN

Railroad Retirement Board – Railroad Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Recovery Plan

Updated 5/12/2010

Objectives

Program Purpose

The Recovery Act provides an appropriation of \$20 million to be used for payment of additional extended unemployment benefits under the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act. The new law provides the temporary extended benefits to employees receiving normal unemployment benefits for days between July 1, 2008, and June 30, 2009.

Public Benefits

The Recovery Act is an unprecedented effort to jumpstart our economy, in part by providing economic relief to those who are in the greatest need, including individuals who have been unemployed for an extended period. These additional unemployment benefits are available to eligible individuals without any restrictions, to be used in whatever way the claimant deems best. To be eligible for unemployment benefits, a claimant must be unemployed, be ready, willing and able to work, and be available for work. Eligibility for special extended unemployment benefits is determined based on the legal requirements outlined in the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act and the RRB's regulations for unemployment benefits.

Measures

The measures have been revised to enrich the performance metrics for Recovery targets. In some instances, targets will not be available until additional baseline data has been collected.

Measure	Target/Actual			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Payment Accuracy – Unemployment Insurance	99.25%/ 98.93%			

Measure Information

Frequency: Long-term/Annual

Direction: Increasing

Type: Outcome

Explanation: Percentage of unemployment dollars paid correctly. Since one of the program's primary missions is to provide benefits for rail employees while they are unemployed, ensuring that their benefits are received without material error is one of the critical goals of the program.

Unit: %

Measure	Target/Actual			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Timeliness of Unemployment and Sickness Insurance Payments	99.8%/ 99.8%			

Measure Information

Frequency: Long-term/ Annual

Direction: Increasing

Type: Outcome

Explanation: Percentage of payments or denials issued within 10 days of receipt of claim. This program provides benefits to railroad workers and their dependents during periods of unemployment or sickness. It is important to minimize the amount of time between when an applicant files for benefits and when they receive a payment or a notice providing the reason for denial.

Unit: %

Schedule and Milestones

The following are the major milestones planned to implement the Extended Unemployment Benefits program:

Milestone 1: April 24, 2009, Issue advance notices to claimants who may be entitled to extended unemployment benefits. Notices will be sent out weekly as additional individuals exhaust their unemployment benefits and may become entitled to the extended benefits.

Milestone 2: June 30, 2009, Begin issuing claims and/or payments to individuals eligible for extended unemployment benefits.

Milestone 3: December 31, 2009, Latest starting date for an extended unemployment benefit period under the Recovery Act.

Milestones

Milestone	Target Completion Date	Actual Completion Date
April 24, 2009, Issue advance notices to claimants who may be entitled to extended unemployment benefits. Notices will be sent out weekly as additional individuals exhaust their unemployment benefits and may become entitled to the extended benefits.	04/24/2009	04/24/2009
June 30, 2009, Begin issuing claims and/or payments to individuals eligible for extended unemployment benefits.	06/30/2009	06/30/2009
December 31, 2009, Latest starting date for an extended unemployment benefit period under the Recovery Act.	12/31/2009	12/31/2009

Projects and Activities

The Extended Unemployment Benefits program is a single project which involves the identification of entitled individuals, the release of notices and claims to those individuals, and payments made for eligible claims. The Railroad Retirement Board has been apportioned \$20 million to pay these extended benefits and \$80,000 for related administrative expenses.

Review Process

The RRB tracks all Extended Unemployment Benefits to ensure that funds provided specifically for this purpose under the Recovery Act are kept separate from other agency funding. Specific Treasury Appropriation Fund Symbols have been established for this express purpose. In addition, the RRB is using its existing cost accounting system which is integrated with the agency's financial system to track administrative expenses specifically related to the Extended Unemployment Benefits.

The principal risks involved with this program are related to keeping all financial transactions separate from the existing "regular" benefit payment systems and not exceeding the \$20 million dollar appropriation as directed in the Recovery Act. These risks are being mitigated through extensive re-programming of daily unemployment systems, which is well-documented and thoroughly tested.

To ensure that the \$20 million is not exceeded, we have closely monitored the amount of payments being made on a daily basis, as well as any returned payments or erroneous payments. Once we determine the \$20 million available for these benefits has been exhausted or as of the ending date of the program (whichever comes first), we will post a public notice on our website that the program has ended and will deny any further claims filed for special extended benefits.

The RRB's Office of Inspector General also examined the agency's compliance with the ARRA - Extended Unemployment Benefits program and concluded that the agency's assertion that it had complied with the legal provisions was fairly stated. See <http://www.rrb.gov/pdf/oig/REPORTS/1005.pdf>.

Cost and Performance Plan

The RRB provides more detailed information about the Extended Unemployment Benefits on its website at <http://www.rrb.gov/recovery/default.asp>. The public can find Frequently Asked Questions dealing with detailed eligibility criteria, information on the taxability of these payments, and how to claim benefits. In addition, the site links to RRB's Recovery Act press releases and to other agencies that are involved in the Recovery Act. Finally, the site includes a link to the RRB Office of Inspector General website, where information can be found regarding the OIG's oversight related to RRB's Recovery Act responsibilities.

The RRB has designated the Director of Programs as the Senior Accountable Official for this program. She and her staff work closely with other agency senior officials, including the Chief Financial Officer, the Chief Information Officer, the Director of Administration, and the General Counsel to oversee all aspects of the project. These aspects include program/policy development and coordination of benefits, new procedures, financial and cost accounting, legal opinions and advice, and release of information to the public. All of these senior officials are members of the agency's Executive Committee, which is responsible for agency operations overall, and which reports to the head of the agency (the three-member Board).

Energy Efficiency Spending Plans

No Data Available

Program Plan Type Awards

No Data Available