

Short Lines and Regionals

Delaware & Hudson gets a \$28 million track and signaling upgrade

Through much of its long and colorful history, the Delaware & Hudson has been known as "the Bridge Line to New England and Canada." Now, new owner CP Rail is spending \$28 million to strengthen that bridge.

"To renew our ability to compete for business in the northeastern U.S., the D&H

has to begin with the basics and the most important item is good track," says Tom Waver, general manager of operations and maintenance.

The rehabilitation program began last spring, only months after CP Rail acquired the D&H from the bankruptcy trustees. The program will finish near the end of this year.

Its primary objective is to bring most of the 575 miles of D&H main line up to 50 mph standards. To accomplish this, D&H crews—using their own and CP Rail's equipment—will totally replace 20 miles of main line track, replace worn ties on 216 miles of track in New York and Pennsylvania, and renew and resurface 231 miles of main line and 40 miles of yard trackage.

Under the terms of the sale, the states of New York and Pennsylvania have contributed a total of \$6.5 million to this year's rehabilitation program on the D&H-owned lines between Binghamton, Albany, and the Montreal area. The railway has retained its long-standing trackage rights over Conrail south from Binghamton to Potomac Yard, in suburban Washington, D.C., and west to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Other important components of this year's rehabilitation program include: replacement of 19 timber bridge decks; Thermitite welding of 600 rail joints; installation of a new traffic control system at D&H headquarters at Clifton Park, N.Y.; and improvements to 14 hotbox and dragging equipment detectors.

For John Adamson, the D&H's general manager of sales and marketing, the result of this work will be "a solid, reliable system which will be much easier to sell to customers. We have already benefitted from CP Rail's purchase just by virtue of its reputation throughout North American industry. The CP name means superior service to many of our current and potential shippers.

"While the D&H was by no means a dog prior to the CP purchase, there were trouble spots. For example, East Binghamton Yard was creating a bit of a reliability problem for us, causing delays to main line trains and our connections to Conrail and the New York, Susquehanna & Western. It is the hub of the D&H and when it works well, so does the whole D&H system. It was one of the first facilities to receive attention."

As part of the 1991 program, East Binghamton Yard has been given 11 rebuilt classification tracks and five rehabilitated holding tracks. Between the holding tracks, roadways for motorized inspection and mechanical department vehicles have been built to eliminate the need to cut bad order rolling stock out of trains and move it to the car shop.

The work program has been carried out on a block system that has minimized disruption to D&H freight trains and Amtrak's

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