Bicycle Advisory Committee

CORRESPONDENCE

Part 1

March 19, 2015
Today at least 7 bikes were bumped from 269 NB in Redwood city. Not good...
Ryan
Hi Andria,

Thanks for the (quick) response. One further comment.

"we’ve determined that each rack can safely accommodate up to four bikes."

I understand that this is your position; that is not in question. What I’m questioning, and what keeps getting deflected, is: *how* did you determine this? As somebody who has been riding Caltrain with my bike nearly every day for almost 8 years, I can see no good reason why this needs to be. When I see 5 bikes fit on a rack tightly taking up less space than 4 (or sometimes even 3!) packed poorly, I can see no reason how this affects safety. But maybe I’m missing something, hence why I’m asking Caltrain to defend this position with evidence, not just by repeating it.

So: *how* did Caltrain determine that 4, and no more than 4, bikes per rack is safe? Was there a study? Is there some law that explicitly states 4? Something drove somebody to make this decision -- at a time when a fraction of today’s bicyclists were using the train, by the way -- and I think it’s highly suspect that whatever went into this decision can’t be reconsidered. I’m not sure why Caltrain is so resistant to revisit this as it is in your benefit as well as that of bicyclists to increase the number of bicycles per rack.

Thanks for your time,
Jonathan Dirrenberger

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On Tue, Mar 10, 2015 at 4:15 PM, De La Torre, Andria <delatorrea@samtrans.com> wrote:

Good Afternoon Jonathan. Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors, Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee and Bicycle Advisory Committee was referred to me for response. The groups will receive a copy of our correspondence.

Thank you for sharing your experience this morning. We regret to hear that you and several other bicyclists were not able to board Train 230 from the San Francisco station. This morning, the train that leaves about 30 minutes before yours was only operating with one bike car, so this impacted the trains after it. There are periodically mechanical or service issues that change the types of cars we usually run on a particular train or decreases the number of bike cars available.
We understand that you do not agree with the maximum bicycles per rack limit, and we regret the challenge this policy may cause to some customers with bikes. However, our focus is on providing a safe service to all passengers, and we’ve determined that each rack can safely accommodate up to four bikes.

We have also shared your report with our Operations staff to review the boarding procedures at San Francisco. Each crew must follow all of the proper steps to prepare the train which does take a little time. However we understand the need to have a smooth boarding process which allows enough time for all passengers to board before the scheduled departure time.

We again apologize for the inconvenience this has caused you to your commute and thank you for sharing your feedback.

Kind Regards,

Andria

Andria De La Torre
SamTrans | Caltrain | TA
Customer Service Department
1250 San Carlos Ave.
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306
1-800-660-4287
www.smctd.com

Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 9:11 AM
To: Bartholomew, Tasha; Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com); lindella@samtrans.com; cac@caltrain.com; Board (@caltrain.com)
Cc: bikesonboard@sfbike.org
Subject: Bikes on Caltrain - Bicycle Bump Report on 10 March 2015

Hi,
I and at *least* 12 other bicyclists were bumped from the 230 train with Bombardier cars at 4th St on the morning of 10 March 2015. I guarantee you that at least another dozen were then bumped at 22nd St, and probably a handful more at points further south. That's approximately 30 people bumped on one train! I honestly think those making the decisions about Caltrain's bicycle capacity need to experience this themselves so the understand how utterly frustrating it is. I'm missing a meeting at work especially since now I have to take the bullet which doesn't stop at my station requiring a longer commute. This problem is all because the regular Gallery cars were replaced with the Bombardier cars which do not have sufficient bicycle storage. These Bombardier cars are a problem and you must add a 3rd bicycle car to them as soon as possible.

Also, Caltrain needs to abandon the outdated (created long before Caltrain was this popular and bicycle bumps were a problem) rule that there can only be 4 bicycles per rack. This is arbitrary and does not allow for efficient use of extremely limited space. Since keeping the aisles clear for safety reasons is the intent of this rule, just change the rule to be: bicycles must not block the aisle (as indicated with lines on the floor). This means bicyclists can pack as many bicycles on the rack as they can as long as the aisle remains clear. Note that this often means 5 bicycles can fit on a rack. However, it will be important to sign this rule properly so bicyclists understand that they need to pack their bicycles more tightly. And conductors need to make announcements accordingly. Trust me: if bicyclists know that careful packing is the difference between getting on the train or not, it will happen.

Finally, what is the deal with the conductors not providing access to the trains at 4th St until the last minute? This morning, the entire station was clogged because, even though the 332 train was sitting there, conductors would not allow access until about 5 minutes before departure. Try to imagine just how inefficient this process is given the entirely inadequate size of the station and platform at 4th St. It completely shuts down people's ability to move through the station as well as making the boarding process a unnecessarily stressful mess. There is no reason Caltrain can't figure this out given that these trains have just been sitting there. If nothing else, have one of the conductors who are just *standing* there doing nothing go into the station and direct people where to stand so they don't shut down the whole station.

Thanks for your time,
Thank you for your email Shirley. Seamus Murphy has reached out to Janice Li for a more in-depth conversation regarding this bike bump form. I don’t know if they have spoken yet, but I am awaiting direction from him after that conversation occurs.

Regards,
Tasha

Tasha Bartholomew, Community Relations Officer
Office of Public Affairs
San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans, Caltrain, TA)
1250 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos CA 94070
650.508.7927 (direct line)

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Hello Tasha,

Let’s collaborate on bump reporting.

At this morning's JPB meeting, I presented a new method of reporting bumps using sfbike.org/bumpform. This form automatically populates a spreadsheet in real-time at sfbike.org/bumpreports. Mr. Scanlon praised this method during his executive director's report saying that “being able to work with the data is a good step forward.”

We created this form, because according to Mark Simon's email below, the bump report project was abandoned.

Although it came as a surprise that Caltrain released its bump form this afternoon (https://twitter.com/BikesOnCaltrain/status/573639945086095360), this would be an excellent opportunity to collaborate.

The Caltrain form has the advantage that it sends a tweet. The sfbike form has the advantage that it collects more thorough information and compiles all bump reports in real-time in a publicly available spreadsheet that
can be easily downloaded for data analysis. If we combined the methods, it would provide both Caltrain and bike commuters a single source for bump reporting that would yield the best benefit to everyone.

In addition, we currently have a team of software engineers who have volunteered their time to work on data visualization to help commuters choose the best trains for their commutes.

Please accept our offer to collaborate.

Best regards,
Shirley

__From:__ "Bartholomew, Tasha" <bartholomewt@samtrans.com>
__To:__ "Bartholomew, Tasha" <bartholomewt@samtrans.com>
__Sent:__ Friday, January 23, 2015 11:08 AM
__Subject:__ Message from Mark Simon Re: Bike Bump Form

To the BAC and to all who have weighed in recently concerning the efforts by Caltrain to develop a formal method by which cyclists can report that they were unable to board a train due to the unavailability of bike slots:

Given the latest round of discussions and the inability to reach consensus on the information that should be gathered by this form, I believe it is best to abandon the project and the attempt to formalize bump reporting as an official Caltrain activity.

Since the bump reporting effort began, bicycle bumps have been informally tracked by Bikes on Board volunteers and contained unsubstantiated reports by Caltrain customers. In March, 10 months ago, I came to the BAC and proposed that we work together to develop a more formal manner in which the bump data is collected. This was done both out of a desire to obtain more accurate information and because a Bikes on Board volunteer asked that she be relieved of the task of compiling the information provided by the informal count effort.

My concern, openly expressed at the time, was that the current manner of bump counting under the Bikes on Board program was anecdotal at best and was information that did not constitute genuine data. It was my hope that a more effective and accurate manner of collecting this information could be devised. As a public transit agency, we have an obligation to provide data that is valid and credibly collected. The Bikes on Board information, while useful, does not meet the standard we have to operate under as a public agency. Specifically, the fact that cyclists can report other cyclists as being bumped creates a fundamental flaw in the information. For example, it is not unusual to receive reports from the same train by two cyclists that they and three others were bumped. Are they counting the same bumps? Is that four bumps, five bumps or eight? Similarly, we don’t know if someone who is counted by a third party as being bumped is truly someone who was denied boarding or someone who was awaiting the arrival of a different train. It is not unusual to receive a bump report that says, “Me and 5 or 6 others were bumped.” Is that six or seven?

Throughout the time that bump reporting has been undertaken informally, Bikes on Board advocates have contended that the number of bumps is significantly undercounted, relying on a calculation of trends and other information. In fact, the annual February count conducted by Caltrain suggests the reports provided by Bikes on Board substantially over-count the number of bumps, even when the February data is extrapolated and adjusted to reflect higher ridership trends that occur in the mid-year. All other data we collect about ridership confirms the accuracy of the February count. Why the bump data would vary significantly is a puzzle, but it was our hope that a formal bike bump form
would resolve this question. In either case, both Bikes on Board advocates and Caltrain staff agree that the current means of counting bumps is likely to be inaccurate, given that it is entirely anecdotal and relies on the accuracy and veracity of second-hand information.

We proposed that individuals be able to report only their bumps and not report other bumps they may have observed, this having occurred with widely varying degrees of accuracy and certainty. A BAC subcommittee was formed to develop the form and a tremendous amount of work was done, including several meetings with the subcommittee and the staff and significant work by subcommittee members to develop a form that would be easy to use, could be widely disseminated and prove effective.

The unresolved point of contention has been, and remains, allowing people to report not only their own bump, but as many other bumped cyclists as they could observe. Even though Caltrain staff was averse to what struck us as a haphazard manner of reporting information that would be provided to the Caltrain board of directors as an official report, we agreed to compromise. A comment section was added to the form and second-hand observations could be made there. Others, including members of the BAC, assert that the comment section is insufficient and that the form should more precisely replicate the Bikes on Board reporting method and allow a specific means by which people can report the bumping of others.

If the net result of this effort is a reporting method that is identical to one already in place – one that doesn’t use staff or public resources -- then there is no reason to change.

Unless I hear a compelling case otherwise, that is my decision.

I regret that this decision means we will not be able to take advantage of the hard work and expertise brought to this effort by the subcommittee. I am deeply grateful to Amithaba for his efforts to develop a reporting form that could be circulated in realtime so that cyclists could learn about full bike cars before they go to the station. I am disappointed we are unable to move forward, but I can’t justify expending staff resources on something that is already being done, nor am I willing to formally provide the board information that is only anecdotal at best or to assign the Caltrain name to information that does not meet a standard of accuracy.

Mark Simon
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Hello,

Please consider putting in a bike corral near the west entrance of Millbrae station.

The bike racks that are currently there are either fully occupied or are so far away out of the way that they are not used. One set of racks is at the far north end of the station out of sight that I've never seen people use it except as exercise equipment.

Meanwhile bikes are parked on stairways, sign poles and barricades. I think it's time for a bike corral right at the entrance by the kiss and ride. I probably won't use it myself regularly since I rent a bike locker at the station by I'm seeing bikes parked at odd places. Ideally the new corral would be in bike to work day. But as long it's just considered it'd be wonderful.

Thanks,
Manito
How about a bike corral in this space?
Existing Bike Racks here

Existing Bike Racks here (under the underpass)

Transit Station Entrance

Possible Bike Corral

Bikes park here on railings and sign posts

Existing Bike Racks here (under the underpass)
Hello Mr. Birch,

You were referred to me for response. For the last four years as part of Caltrain’s annual Passenger Counts, surveyors have counted the number of bikes onboard Caltrain, as well as the number of bicyclists denied boarding. Results of the 2015 Passenger Counts will likely be made available during the April 2 JPB meeting.

Best,

**Tasha Bartholomew, Community Relations Officer**  
Office of Public Affairs  
San Mateo County Transit District *(SamTrans, Caltrain, TA)*  
1250 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos, CA 94070  
650.508.7927 (direct line)

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**From:** Tom Birch [mailto:froody@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 05, 2015 5:24 PM  
**To:** Nabong, Sarah  
**Cc:** bikesonboard@sfbike.org; janice@sfbike.org; Board (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com)  
**Subject:** Re: Bikes on Caltrain Comment

3+ bikes bumped from north car of NB269 at Palo Alto this afternoon. There are people with clipboards counting bikes on the trains, are they also counting bumps?

Cheers,  
Tom
Dear Joint Powers Board,

We have changed the way we are asking users to report bicycle bumps. Instead of using email, we have created a bump report form here: sfbike.org/bumpform

All bump reports are shown in real-time here: sfbike.org/bumpreports

We have changed the method of bump reporting for the following reasons:
1. We do not want to waste paper in the correspondence packet.
2. It is easier for users to report via a form than via email, particularly on smart phones.
3. All bumps are shown in real-time in a spreadsheet to help bicycle commuters with commute planning.
4. The data are provided in a standardized format.

We hope that you welcome this improvement.

To summarize the reported bumps for February, I am including a bump graph along with the raw data. There were 189 reported bicycle bumps in February 2015, a 210% increase compared with February 2014. This is a testament to the popularity of the service, and we again thank you for planning to add a third bike car to Bombardier trains later this year.

Best regards,
Shirley
Caltrain leaves customers with bicycles behind

Not all bumps are reported, so actual bumps are more than shown.
## User-Reported Bicycle Bumps February 2015

### Total Unique Bumps Reported: 189

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicate Repeat Reports</th>
<th>Date of bicycle bump(s)</th>
<th>Total number of bumped bikes</th>
<th>Departure station</th>
<th>Travel direction</th>
<th>Scheduled departure time</th>
<th>Train number</th>
<th>Train type</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:54pm</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>San Mateo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:54pm</td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>279</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Menlo Park</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:57pm</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>San Mateo</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:36pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/04</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>22nd Street</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>9:02am</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/04</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:25pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/05</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:03am</td>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/05</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>269</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some comments from users:

- **02/03 14 Palo Alto North 5:54pm 277 Gallery**
  - Might miss rental inspection

- **02/03 4 San Mateo**
  - This has never happened at this station to me and is an ominous sign of lack of bike capacity on Caltrain.

- **02/03 16 Palo Alto North 5:54pm 277**
  - Please increase room for bikes on CalTrain. Maybe hit up Facebook or one of the other dot com entities for some funds. Seems like they have an abundance of employees in SF that bike commute. Just saying.

- **02/03 1 Palo Alto**
  - While I understand there is limited space, this is quite an inconvenience for those who depend on Caltrain for transportation. It is only the first week in February.

- **02/03 6 Redwood City**
  - Tonight I needed to get home to relieve my nanny at 7, but that won't happen because you stubbornly refuse to address the actual issue of bikes being bumped. Tonight I will pay for it with an extra 45 minutes of pay to my nanny, a wasted 45 minutes of time I could have spent with my daughter, and a pair of gloves that I apparently drop while running between cars. Awesome! Implementing a queuing system would help fairness. Another improvement would be to publish detailed bump statistics by train and station so I can at least try to determine which trains to avoid. Another option, particularly at RWC for the timed transfer to local service would be allow more bikes on because there are always a ton more that get off at the very next stop. It makes no sense to bump a bunch of people only to have half the bikes get off right away. I only wish you would DO something to improve the random kick in the face that is get bumped from Caltrain. There are many options, just try something.

- **02/03 3 Menlo Park North 5:57pm 277 Gallery**

- **02/03 3 San Mateo North 5:36pm 269 Gallery**
  - I was lucky enough to get on, others weren't so lucky. The train was at bike capacity, but still plenty of spare seats.

- **02/04 3 22nd Street South 9:02am 332 Gallery**
  - I was last on. Count for rear bike car only.

- **02/05 5 Millbrae 8:03am 220**

- **02/05 3 Palo Alto North 269**
  - Bikes bumped from north car.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicate Repeat Reports</th>
<th>Date of bicycle bump(s)</th>
<th>Total number of bumped bikes</th>
<th>Departure station</th>
<th>Travel direction</th>
<th>Scheduled departure time</th>
<th>Train number</th>
<th>Train type</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hillsdale</td>
<td>North</td>
<td></td>
<td>323</td>
<td></td>
<td>What's most upsetting is that I was bumped from the first car and sprinted down to the second car, only to have the doors closed a few seconds before I got there. Through the windows I could see two racks with only two bikes each on them. So the whole bumping business could have been avoided altogether with better communication. Most bikers try their best to work within the system, but in 18 months of bike commuting via Caltrain, I've mostly seen conductors act rudely or impatiently with bikers (with some refreshing exceptions). I get that Caltrain is the only commuter rail option for the peninsula, so commuters have no leverage. But conductors are making a crappy situation worse with their attitude.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4th &amp; King</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>6:56pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This was my first time ever riding Caltrain. There was plenty of room on my 6:45 ride to Palo Alto, but I was disappointed by the overwhelming lack of capacity for bicycle commuters on my way back. It was really cramped and uncomfortable. Please support us bicyclists by adding enough bike capacity on your trains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Menlo Park</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>6:46pm</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>It was so disheartening. It made me really sad. Had such a long day and just wanted to go home. As ridership increases, can we not add more trains and/or more bike cars?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:25pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Only one bike was allowed to board. I was there 15 mins early to be sure to get a spot but came out empty. Missed my meeting in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mountain View</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>7:57am</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>There was space for bikes but the conductor was freaking out and did not let us on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>7:30am</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>Combo train due to fatality (should have been a gallery but was a bombardier and it was packed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hillsdale</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>7:51am</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>whenever trains get combined, they bumped bikers. It really is annoying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>7:27am</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>A ton of bikes were getting on and filled it up. It made me late for date night :(</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>02/12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>6:43 pm</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
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<td>Indicate Repeat Reports</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:17am</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>1st SB train of the day when operating on a holiday schedule is a bombardier and far over capacity for bikes by the time it hits Millbrae...really? Is this mendacity of sheer incompetence? Made an extra effort to travel to a station several miles from my home station to attempt to get to work at best an hour late and ended up being several hours late, no announcement of the train on the announcement board, conductor tells me there's another train behind, which is correct, but 20 minutes behind isn't directly behind right, and isn't that always true in some capacity, there's always another train behind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:15am</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>There seemed room onboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:15am</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>There seemed room onboard</td>
</tr>
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<td>2/19</td>
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<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:32am</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Menlo Park</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>6:19pm</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Sadness, late for dinner (again)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:32am</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22nd Street</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>7:49am</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Well it affects my day because I have to catch a connecting shuttle in Palo Alto. And even though I only have to wait 13 minutes for the next train it means I start work 35 minutes later and therefore I end up working 50 minutes extra at the end of the day due to associated shuttles and train schedules. It's a real drag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Millbrae</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:15am</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>California Avenue</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>9:42am</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td>No ahead warning of train being at capacity for bikes. Conductor was rude to bumped passengers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hillsdale</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>8:16am</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:16pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Bombardier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:25 pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>The usual, missing time with my family. Suggestion of the day: redesign the bike racks for the new bombardier cars to fit more bikes. There is plenty of wasted space in the current arrangement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Menlo Park</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>6:46pm</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>I caught the next train (287) which was maybe only half full.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat</td>
<td>02/24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Redwood City</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>5:25 pm</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22nd Street</td>
<td>South</td>
<td>8:19am</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Conductor with short blonde hair said no more space. At the rear of the car there were at least 4 not full racks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Menlo Park</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>6:46pm</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>Gallery</td>
<td>Second bump this week and the train was 20 minutes late. It would be nice to get home for dinner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Good Afternoon Mr. Solis. Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors, Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee and Bicycle Advisory Committee was referred to me for response. The groups will receive a copy of our correspondence.

Thank you for letting us know about your experience on Caltrain yesterday. We regret that you were not able to board your intended train and apologize for the inconvenience this caused you.

Caltrain is experiencing unprecedented growth in ridership for customers travelling both with and without bicycles. Although we successfully transport about 6,000 customers with bikes on an average weekday, we realize that other customers would like to bring their bikes on board. Our conductors are responsible for only allowing a safe number of customers with bikes board the train. While we try to accommodate as many bicycles as possible, the total count cannot exceed four per rack, for a total of 48 on Bombardier equipment and 80 on our Gallery equipment. We strive to set expectations for customers about whether they'll be able to board with a bike. One way we do this is with information on our website. We note that if the bike car is full, the cyclist will have to get wait for the next train.

As we consider additions to our rail car fleet, we'll evaluate the feasibility of any further expansion, balanced with the needs of customers without bikes, customers with luggage and customers with wheelchairs and other mobility devices. In the meantime, many Caltrain stations have an ample supply of bike lockers for customers to rent. We list the stations with locker availability at www.caltrain.com/bikelockers.

Again, we apologize for the inconvenience you experienced on your first commute with your bicycle. We look forward to providing you with more positive experiences on your future commutes.

Kind Regards,
Andria
I am writing to let you know that I and at least a dozen other people were bumped on my rush hour commute taking the northbound caltrain from Palo Alto to San Francisco. This was my first time ever riding Caltrain. There was plenty of room on my 6:45 ride to Palo Alto, but I was disappointed by the overwhelming lack of capacity for bicycle commuters on my way back. It was really cramped and uncomfortable.

Please support us bicyclists by adding enough bike capacity on your trains.
McKenna, Nancy

From: Gary Wu <gwu@conifer.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 6:58 PM
To: Nabong, Sarah
Cc: bikesonboard@sfbike.org; janice@sfbike.org; Board (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Bikes on Caltrain Comment

8 bikes bumped 6:56pm south from 4th and king.
Thank you for taking the time to respond! I appreciate it.

On Tue, Feb 10, 2015 at 3:53 PM, De La Torre, Andria <delatorrea@samtrans.com> wrote:

Good afternoon Simon. Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors, Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee and Bicycle Advisory Committee was referred to me for response. The groups will receive a copy of our correspondence.

Thank you for letting us know about your experience on Caltrain this morning. We regret that you were not able to board your intended train and apologize for the inconvenience this caused you.

Conductors are responsible for only allowing a safe number of customers with bikes on board the train, with no more than four per rack. Unfortunately the train is not held as customers shift cars as our station stops are very brief in order to adhere to our published schedule. If the bike car becomes full, cyclists will have to wait for the next train. We regret to hear that you observed more bike space within the second bike car than were able to board. We have shared this report with our Operations staff to review the capacity limits with the crew and emphasize the importance of communication between crew members as well as remaining professional at all times.

Again, we apologize for the inconvenience that you experienced. We value your patronage and thank you for your feedback.

Kind Regards,

Andria

Andria De La Torre

SamTrans | Caltrain | TA
Three bikes bumped from NB323 today at Hillsdale. What's most upsetting is that I was bumped from the first car and sprinted down to the second car, only to have the doors closed a few seconds before I got there. Through the windows I could see two racks with only two bikes each on them. So the whole bumping business could have been avoided altogether with better communication. Most bikers try their best to work within the system, but in 18 months of bike commuting via Caltrain, I've mostly seen conductors act rudely or impatiently with bikers (with some refreshing exceptions). I get that Caltrain is the only commuter rail option for the peninsula, so commuters have no leverage. But conductors are making a crappy situation worse with their attitude.
Dear Joint Powers Board,

I would like to offer a response to Roland LaBrun’s letter and associated public comment regarding bike cars on Bombardier trains that he presented at the February 5 JPB meeting. We appreciate all input and ideas, but unfortunately there are some fatal flaws with Mr. LaBrun’s recommendations.

Mr. LaBrun recommended that center seats be removed from Bombardier bike cars instead of adding a third bike car, and to load and unload bikes through separate doors. We explain below why both these ideas aren’t practical.

**Center seats needed for safety and theft prevention**

There are two main problems with removing center seats from Bombardier bike cars:

1. The center seats are adjacent to emergency exit windows. By replacing the center seats with bike racks, the emergency exit windows would be blocked by bicycles stacked against the racks, making emergency egress difficult or impossible.
2. Bicyclists need to sit near their bikes to guard against damage and theft, and removing the center seats would leave only three seats in the bike area of the car. Bombardier bike cars currently have 15 seats and 24 bike spaces in the bike area, and unfortunately bikes are occasionally stolen from trains today. Caltrain requires bikes to be unlocked in the bike car for ease of maneuverability, so it is easy to snatch a bike and exit the train. A configuration with only three seats near the bikes would make Caltrain a thief magnet. Alternatively, bicyclists could stand in the bike car to guard against theft, but many standees in the bike car and near doorways would hinder entry and egress of all passengers, thereby increasing dwell time.

**Designated entry and exit doors for bikes increase dwell time**

Theoretically it may seem beneficial to designate entry and exit doors for bikes on Bombardier bike cars, but in practice, one-way flow of bikes actually increases dwell time. Caltrain conducted a pilot for designated entry and exit doors several years ago, but quickly abandoned it. There is rarely an equal number of bikes boarding and exiting at a station, so designated entry and exit doors led to a big bottleneck as cyclists had to maneuver their bikes in a one-way direction through the car to exit instead of jumping out the nearest door. At stations where more bikes boarded than exited, there was a long line at the “entry” door, while the “exit” door stood unused.

Once again, we welcome all ideas and suggestions, as brainstorming is a valuable exercise. In this case, however, the recommendations would not result in an improvement, and would, in fact, be a detriment. Adding a third bike car to Bombardier trains is the better way to accommodate customer demand. Thank you for choosing the better option.

Sincerely,

Shirley Johnson, PhD
Leader, BIKES ONboard project
Thank you for the additional feedback. As stated, we hope our future progressions will help alleviate some of the challenges faced today. We don't have hard data but presume that some customers will opt for gallery trains because of the higher capacity. The boarding ideas you presented, including the queuing system, have been shared with our Rail Transportation Department for future consideration.

Thank you again for sharing your input and ideas towards our future services.

Regards,

Andria De La Torre  
SamTrans | Caltrain | TA  
Customer Service Department  
1250 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306  
1-800-660-4287  
www.smctd.com

Thanks for the response.

I'm curious if you have any data to support your hope that the new cars with relieve some capacity from the gallery trains. I don't think it's likely given that there are no bombardier trains adjacent to those that have capacity issues at RWC. I'd love to see data that refutes my belief, but I doubt you have that data. I too hope you are right, but I don't think you are. Either way I'm glad we'll get to find out, so thanks again for getting more bike cars.

What about the issue of queuing bikes at the station? It seems to me like that is low hanging fruit for improving user experience. Even something like the number tickets from a butcher counter would be useful. You could install a bike waiting corral at each bike car where cyclists could line up. I can think of more complicated ideas, but anything would be better than nothing. I think it will save your conductors from being targets of anger for doing their job.
On Thursday, February 5, 2015, De La Torre, Andria <delatorrea@samtrans.com> wrote:

Good afternoon AJ. Your message to the Caltrain Board of Directors, Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee and Bicycle Advisory Committee was referred to me for response. The groups will receive a copy of our correspondence.

We regret that you were not able to board your intended train on Tuesday and apologize for the inconvenience this caused you. As you mentioned, Caltrain is experiencing unprecedented growth in ridership, including bicycle passengers, especially during peak commute hours. Our conductors are responsible for only allowing a safe number of customers with bikes onboard the train. We regret the challenge this policy causes to customers with bikes; however, our focus is on providing a safe service to all passengers. Although bike rack space may be available after certain stops, we cannot sacrifice safety for this presumed possibility, and must enforce the bicycle maximum capacity at all station stops. When we increase the capacity on the Bombardier trains, it may relieve some of the pressure on the 80-bike gallery trains.

We again apologize for the inconvenience. Thank your for sharing your suggestions as we review the feasibility of these options with our rail service.

Kind Regards,

Andria

Andria De La Torre
SamTrans | Caltrain | TA
Customer Service Department
1250 San Carlos Ave.
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306
1-800-660-4287
www.smctd.com
I have to say am impressed that I made it through a whole month of 2015 without getting bumped. Sadly, that run has come to an end. I was just bumped from train 279 At RWC with about 5 others.

Tonight I needed to get home to relieve my nanny at 7, but that won't happen because you stubbornly refuse to address the actual issue of bikes being bumped. Tonight I will pay for it with an extra 45 minutes of pay to my nanny, a wasted 45 minutes of time I could have spent with my daughter, and a pair of gloves that I apparently drop while running between cars. Awesome!

I'm still waiting to see some action to improve service. I'm pleased that you have decided to up the bike capacity of the new trains to be almost the capacity of the old ones. However, the trains that are in demand already have larger capacity and that won't change. If you can't solve the capacity issue you have to do something to make this free-for-all bumping system work. For instance, tonight I started at the front car and ran to the rear car only to be denied there. I'm certain I was at the station before some of those people, but there is no way to prove it. Implementing a queuing system would help fairness. Another improvement would be to publish detailed bump statistics by train and station so I can at least try to determine which trains to avoid. Another option, particularly at RWC for the timed transfer to local service would be allow more bikes on because there are always a ton more that get off at the very next stop. It makes no sense to bump a bunch of people only to have half the bikes get off right away. I only wish you would DO something to improve the random kick in the face that is get bumped from Caltrain. There are many options, just try something.
From: Dan Yang <dsyang@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2015 8:13 AM
To: Nabong, Sarah
Cc: bikesonboard@sfbike.org; Janice Li; Board (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Bikes on Caltrain Comment

5 bicyclists bumped by caltrain 220 @ Millbrae 8:03 am, Feb 5, 2015
I would you just like you to know that I have been bumped from TWO trains in the last 5 days.

Tonight I was bumped from the 277 on Palo Alto.

While I understand there is limited space, this is quite an inconvenience for those who depend on Caltrain for transportation. It is only the first week on February.

Regards,

Antonio Melendez,
ASG QA Attach Partner Applications | Hewlett-Packard Company,
e: antonio.melendez@hp.com<mailto:antonio.melendez@hp.com> | w: 650-258-8002<tel:650-258-8002> | m: 408-540-8042<tel:408-540-8042>
+hp = Everybody On

Please print thoughtfully

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On Sep 15, 2014, at 1:16 PM, "Melendez, Antonio (Engineering Operation)"
<antonio.melendez@hp.com><mailto:antonio.melendez@hp.com>> wrote:

I’m a residence of Burlingame CA working in Sunnyvale, I want to thanks Caltrain for buying new Bombardier cars to alleviate commute-period crowding. On addition I want to inquire Caltrain to deeply consider the new Bombardier cars to be bike cars. Add a third bike car to all Bombardier trains, so they will hold 72 bikes instead of only 48. Bombardier trains hold only 48 but gallery trains hold 80 bikes. Bikers are experiencing bicycle bumps because the limit of bike space.
Environmental benefits of increased onboard bike capacity:

- Increased bike capacity would increase ridership.
- Increased bike capacity would encourage current Caltrain riders to shift from driving to biking.
- More Caltrain riders with bikes onboard would reduce air pollution.
Projections show that over 20% of passengers would bring a bike onboard by 2019. Caltrain should evaluate the impact of increased onboard bike capacity.

When I joined working at HP Cupertino in September 2002, I drove 70 miles on 280 every day, three years ago our entire office moved to Sunnyvale near to 101, So I began taking my bicycle to Caltrain. There is a whole community of people I've gotten to know on the bike cars on the Caltrain. It's a warm, supportive community I found. A real mix of Tech and non-Tech commuters. When I arrive at the Mountain View train station, I bike down Steven Creek trail into the office, I feel better than ever. I'm exercising while I ride to work and back to the train station. It's faster and more fun. A great stress release. It's been a great journey and I wish I had started doing this earlier... Thanks, Antonio Melendez, ASG QA Attach Partner Applications | Hewlett-Packard Company,
e: antonio.melendez@hp.com | w: 650-258-8002 | m: 408-540-8042
+hp = Everybody On
Follow us on: <http://www.youtube.com/user/HP> <https://twitter.com/HP>
<http://www.linkedin.com/company/hewlett-packard>
<https://www.facebook.com/HP>

Please print thoughtfully
From: Billy D <billyd1970@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 6:16 PM
To: bikesonboard@sfbike.org; Nabong, Sarah; Board (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Bumped from 277 @ Palo Alto

Bumped from the 5:54 NB #277 train. I counted 11 of us at the front car and saw at least 5+ that didn't get on the rear bike car.

Please increase room for bikes on CalTrain. Maybe hit up Facebook or one of the other dot com entities for some funds. Seems like they have an abundance of employees in SF that bike commute. Just saying.

Thanks,
Billy D

Email sent from my phone so no guarantees.
>>
From: Michael Fitzsimons <fitzsimons.michael@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 5:47 PM
To: Nabong, Sarah
Cc: Bikes on Board; Janice Li; Board (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Bikes on Caltrain Comment

4 passengers with bikes denied boarding on train 269 at San Mateo this evening. This has never happened at this station to me and is an ominous sign of lack of bike capacity on Caltrain.

Michael Fitzsimons
Please find attached for easy reproduction the Anecdotal Bump Count for January, 2015.

Regards,

Pat Giorni
BikesOnBoard January, 2015

Jan. 5
5 SF-#370 Fred Lam
1 SF-#282 Elaine Lee

Jan. 6
7 PA-#371 Tom Corboline
5 SF-#376 karen okasaki
1 am to SF-#-? Donna Weber

Jan. 7
4+ RWC-#269 Ryan Schmidt

Jan. 8
8+ SF-#370 Alex Herzick

Jan. 12
8+ (repeat) 22nd -#314 Chris Leader
8 22nd -#314 Tom Birch

Jan. 13
1 PA - #323 Daniel I Golden

Jan. 14
2 Hillsdale-#323 Simon Yun
4 SF-#370 Simon Yun

Jan. 20
4 MP-#269 Federico Piagentini

Jan. 21
10 PA-#375 Hilary Douglas
1 MP-#279 Michael Nguyen
2 MP-#277 Michael Nguyen

Jan. 26
10 Hillsdale-#217 John O'Sullivan
6(repeat) Hillsdale-#217 karen okasaki

Jan. 27
6+ Hillsdale-#217 John O'Sullivan
1 RWC-#227 Gary Wu

Total January, 2015 80+

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<td></td>
<td>80+</td>
<td>101+</td>
<td>39+</td>
<td>87+</td>
<td>192+</td>
<td>12+</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
McKenna, Nancy

From: Jonathan Ragan-Kelley <katokop1@gmail.com> on behalf of Jonathan Ragan-Kelley <jrk@cs.stanford.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 28, 2015 1:12 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com)
Cc: cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com); bikesonboard@sfbike.org
Subject: Thank you for adding more bike cars

Adding a third bike car to Bombardier trains, as currently planned, will enormously improve their usability for bikers during peak commute hours. Especially during the warmer months, Bombardier trains had become completely unreliable as a method of regular commuting because of the extremely high probability of being bumped. Increasing bike capacity on these cars will help tremendously.

Thank you,
Jonathan Ragan-Kelley
San Francisco
Got bumped today off bike car. 8:45am Train 227 north bound @ Redwood City.

Thanks,

Gary Wu
Same train #217 NB @ Hillsdale. Although I got on I was the only one. We left at least 6 bicycles behind.
To whom it may concern:

Reporting 6 bicyclists being bumped today from Hillsdale station northbound to San Francisco on 1/27/15, train #217. We were told that the bike car was full.

Sent from my Windows Phone

To whom it may concern:

Reporting 5 bicyclists being bumped last night from San Francisco station southbound to San Jose on 1/5/15, train #376. We were told that the bike car was full.

As part of the new purchase of Bombardier cars, I strongly encourage Caltrain to retrofit the new cars to make at least three bike cars per Bombardier to address the growing ridership, resulting from more and more people with bikes being denied access onboard due to limited bike capacity. Thank you for your time.

Karen Okasaki
(415) 362-7126
Train #217 NB @ Hillsdale

10 bikes bumped, bike cars full.

People now calling work to say they will be late.
McKenna, Nancy

From: Michael Nguyen <mnguyen6@alumni.nd.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 10:41 PM
To: Nabong, Sarah
Cc: Caltrain, Bac (@caltrain.com); Bartholomew, Tasha; bikesonboard@sfbike.org; janice@sfbike.org; cacsecretary (@caltrain.com); Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Re: Bikes on Caltrain Comment

I had an error in my previous email. It was train 277, I was able to catch 279 20 minutes later.

On Jan 23, 2015 6:22 PM, "Michael Nguyen" <mnguyen6@alumni.nd.edu> wrote:

For your records, I and one other person were bumped from train 279 at Menlo Park at 5:57 today.
For your records, today (January 21, 2015) I was bumped from train 279 at Menlo Park (6:19).
10 bikes bumped from NB 375 in Palo Alto.
Worth noting: the car didn't look full and there was a surveyor on the train. Not sure what that means...
~ Hilary Douglas

sent from the iPhone
Hi,

Reporting getting bumped with 3 other bikers on the caltrain northbound at Menlo Park with the 17.19 hs train, on Tuesday Jan 20th.

Thanks
Federico Piagentini
011515

This will allow and help to secure, more riders both bike and pedestrian, which will continue to strengthen the effort being made by all participants.

As a bike rider, my starting point is San Jose and destination is Palo Alto.

Again, thank you for your interest, consideration and for the addition.