



Florida East Coast Railway New River Bridge Closure Question & Answer

Starting **Saturday, February 11, 12:01 a.m., through Thursday, February 23, 12:01 a.m.**, the Florida East Coast Railway Bridge that traverses the New River in downtown Fort Lauderdale will be rehabilitated. While these repairs are occurring, the bridge will remain in the down position, and the span will be unable to lift. All Aboard Florida coordinated this closure with representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF).

Q: Why is this necessary?

A: As part of the construction improvements prior to the introduction of the Brightline passenger service, the company is making significant investments in upgrading the rail infrastructure, including the New River bridge, in preparation for the service beginning in mid-2017.

Q: What is the current status of the bridge's condition?

A: After on site reviews, it was determined that the structural components of the bridge are in good working condition, but certain mechanical components and the electrical system need improvements to prevent the need for future extended closures for repairs.

Q: Do these improvements need to be made before Brightline service begins?

A: Making these improvements before the introduction of the Brightline trains will be beneficial for all as increased frequency of closures would otherwise accelerate the need for this work.

Q: How were the closure dates selected?

A: All Aboard Florida representatives had multiple meetings with MIASF and USCG to determine when the least impactful dates for the rehabilitation work

Q: Will trains use the bridge while it's being repaired?

A: Train use will be limited to specific windows while the bridge is being repaired. During the first and last day of the 12-day closure, trains will not be able to utilize the bridge due to the trunnion support removal and installation.

Q: Why can't the bridge be repaired in the up position?

A: All Aboard Florida directed Archer Western and In-Place Machining Company, its contractor and subcontractor, to develop the safest and most efficient plan to repair the New River Bridge. The safest way to repair a single-span bascule bridge such as this one is to do so in the down position.

Q: What is the scope of work for the bridge rehabilitation?

A: All Aboard Florida is replacing the machinery and electrical system of the bridge and minor rehabilitation of the steel. The majority of this work will occur before the maximum 12-day bridge closure begins. The closure of the bridge is necessary for two components of work. The first is the two outer trunnions will be milled in place, and the second is the trunnion base will be removed and repaired off-site. The work during the closure will be performed around the clock and requires a precise, customized fit between the trunnions and the base plate.

Q: Why is this the safest approach?

A: The trunnions that are being improved are an essential component of the drawbridge rotation during normal operation, similar to an axle holding the wheels of a car. Each of the four trunnions weighs about 1,000 pounds and is approximately a foot long. While trunnion surfaces are milled during the closure period, it is safest to leave the bridge span in a fully supported manner on all four corners with temporary jacks. No rotation can occur while the milling machinery and temporary supports are in place.

Q: What about impacts to marine businesses while the bridge is closed?

A: All Aboard Florida has been working closely with MIASF to minimize the impacts to the industry, yet the long-term benefits will be significant for all parties. The company worked closely with the industry and the USCG to review a plan and identify a date range for the closure that is least impactful.

Q: Can the full closure be done in less than 12 days?

A: We are encouraging our contractor to complete the work as safely as possible in the shortest amount of time. Crews will be working 24 hours per day in order to minimize the bridge closure timeframe. We will know if the closure duration will decrease once the milling work begins.

Q: Why was this date range selected?

A: USCG directed All Aboard Florida not to make repairs to the bridge during hurricane season (June 1-November 30). All Aboard Florida then sought the input of MIASF to determine a closure period.

Q: Can the work take longer to complete?

A: All Aboard Florida does not anticipate the full closure taking longer than 12 days. This plan includes any potential impacts that could occur.

Q: Can a temporary trunnion be installed so the bridge can go up and down?

A: The outer trunnions will be milled in place during this time, thus having a temporary trunnion bearing would not be possible.

Q: Can the bridge span lift with one set of inner trunnions?

A: Rotating the bridge on one set of trunnions would place too much torque on those trunnions, which could cause the bridge to be permanently damaged.

Q: Why can trains use the bridge but boats cannot?

A: The bridge span cannot lift once the trunnion milling begins. We are lifting the bridge 6", removing the trunnion housing and repositioning the bridge in a stable position so we can attach the milling machine to the trunnions to complete the work. This is the safest method as the bridge will be in a fixed position.

Q: Could a crane be installed to lift the bridge if boats need to pass?

A: During the 12-day closure period, the bridge will not be able to rotate since the trunnions will have milling machines attached, therefore, a crane cannot help the bridge open. However, a crane will be on site at all times, and it will be utilized if the work is not completed by 12:01 a.m. on February 23.

Q: What happens if there is an emergency on the river and responders need to pass by?

A: A major component of our outreach effort includes working with the City of Fort Lauderdale Police Department, Fort Lauderdale's Marine Team and tow boat companies to advise them of the closure.

Q: Will there be noise impacts during the 24-hour per day closure work?

A: Disruptive noises are not anticipated during the overnight hours of the closure period.

Q: Who can I speak with about the bridge closure?

A: The All Aboard Florida contact is Public Affairs Manager Ali Soule, 305-520-2105.