

2021

Annual Progress Report

**RIVER
LINK**



Produced By



June 2022

2021 Annual Progress Report

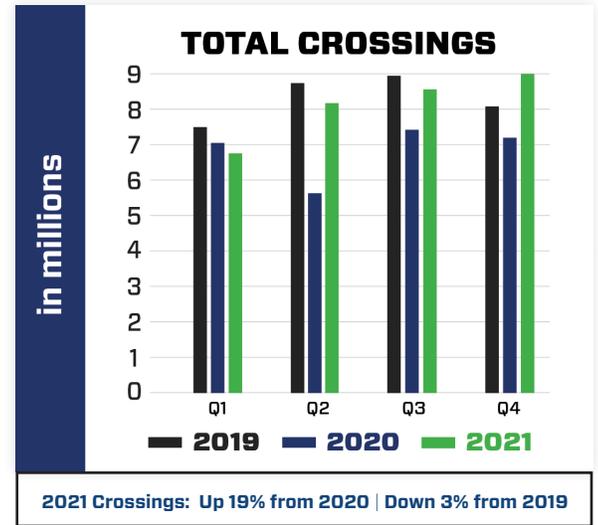
The Annual Progress Report summarizes 2021 activities for RiverLink, the bi-state tolling system for the Ohio River Bridges Project. Tolling on the I-65 Abraham Lincoln Bridge, I-65 Kennedy Bridge and SR265/KY 841 Lewis and Clark Bridge started Dec. 30, 2016. Crossings on tolled bridges and revenue both rebounded from 2020, a year impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders. While the effects of the pandemic were still being felt in 2021, traffic patterns started to return to normal with increased activity throughout the year. The nearly 9 million crossings in the fourth quarter of 2021 were the highest to date for that time period since the start of tolling.

► Crossings on Tolled Bridges

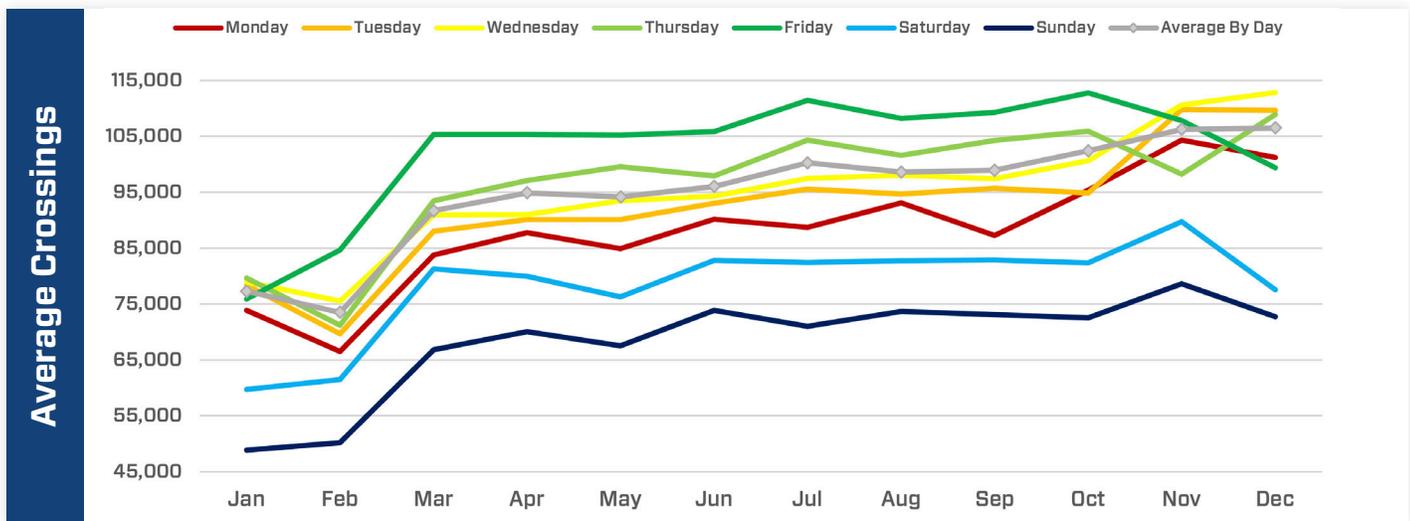
There were nearly 32.5 million crossings on the three tolled bridges in 2021, a 19% increase from 2020 and only a 3% difference from pre-pandemic travel in 2019, demonstrating a return to a steadier state of travel. The average number of crossings increased each quarter of 2021 with fourth quarter crossings up 32% from the first quarter of 2021.

Q1 ↓ 4% **Q2** ↑ 42% **Q3** ↑ 15% **Q4** ↑ 25%

Comparison of 2021 Crossings to 2020 Crossings



Average Crossings by Month and Day of Week



► Prepaid Accounts and Transponders

As crossings increased in 2021, so did the number of drivers with prepaid accounts and transponders. Drivers with prepaid accounts in good standing and transponders save more than \$2 per crossing.

There were 288,691 active prepaid accounts in 2021, **up 24% from 2020**. There were 534,085 valid transponders in 2021, **up 18% from 2020**. Overall, 63% of crossings in 2021 were made with prepaid accounts and transponders. The average weekday transponder penetration rate in 2021 was 65%.

CROSSINGS WITH TRANSPONDERS 2021

OVERALL AVERAGE: 63%

WEEKDAY AVERAGE: 65%

WEEKEND AVERAGE: 54%

► Frequent-User Discount

Prepaid account holders in passenger vehicles who make at least 40 crossings on tolled bridges in a calendar month qualify for a frequent user discount.



► Truck Traffic

Class 3 Vehicles, large trucks with 5-axles or more, made up nearly 14% of traffic on the tolled bridges in 2021. Total truck traffic exceeded 4.4 million crossings; 82% of those crossings occurred with transponders in use.

► Account Conversion

Account conversion allows qualifying drivers to open prepaid accounts and have tolls owed lowered to transponder rates, with fees waived. The offer is available once per license plate. More than 86,000 accounts were opened in 2021 with average savings of nearly \$90 per person.

► Customer Service

More than 303,000 calls were answered by RiverLink customer service representatives in 2021, with an average speed of 54 seconds to answer a call.

► Customer Satisfaction

RiverLink conducted its annual customer satisfaction survey in May 2022. 77% of respondents indicated their overall experience was positive. 43% of respondents described their experience as excellent and 34% indicated their experience was good.

► Revenue

Toll revenue is divided evenly between Indiana and Kentucky. Toll revenue is used to meet financial obligations of the Louisville – Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project and for operations and maintenance of the project area. Toll revenue was up 3% in Fiscal Year 2021 when revenue totaled \$103.7 million.

Significant increases were seen in the first half of Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2021-December 2021) with revenue up 43% from the same time period in Fiscal Year 2021 (July 2020-December 2020) and up nearly 13% from same time period (pre-pandemic) in Fiscal Year 2020. Since the start of tolling, revenue has totaled \$509.5 million. Both states are meeting their financial obligations for the Bridges Project.

TOTAL REVENUE TO DATE: \$509.5 MILLION

12/30/16 – 12/31/21

**Commonwealth
of Kentucky**

**\$254.75
million**

State of Indiana

**\$254.75
million**

Debt Service on Bridge
Project and Operations
for Maintenance for
Bridges Project Area (KY)

Tolling System
Operations and
Maintenance
(Both)

Availability Payments on
Lewis and Clark Bridge
Construction and
Indiana Approaches (IN)

► **Environmental Justice (EJ) Assessment**

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income. It includes identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations.

Overview

The Tolling Mitigation Plan was designed to mitigate the adverse effects of tolling on EJ populations and was adopted by the States' Tolling Body (May 2016). It included measures to minimize the adverse economic impacts of tolling on EJ populations.

An assessment of transponder usage by members of EJ communities shows the objective of the Tolling Mitigation Plan is being met and the measures in place are working.

Data gathered for the 2021 annual progress report shows a difference of 10 percentage points in transponder usage between all drivers crossing tolled bridges (63%) and drivers in 23 zip codes identified for the environmental justice assessment (73%).

Crossings on TARC Buses

As part of the Tolling Mitigation Plan, \$20 million in funding was provided to the Transit Authority of River City (TARC). The money was used to construct and/or expand park and ride facilities, purchase buses and vans and improve existing bus stops. TARC buses are exempt from paying tolls.

There were 35,534 cross-river trips on tolled bridges by TARC-related vehicles in 2021, including trips made by smaller vehicles on contracted routes for riders with special needs.