



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

NOV 27 2017

Mr. John Potter
President and Chief Executive Officer
Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
1 Aviation Circle
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Potter:

Thank you for your letter of October 20, 2017, which requests the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) early engagement in the safety certification process for Phase 2 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (Dulles Project). Additionally, the letter requests that the Pre-Revenue Service Review (PRSR) be performed in two parts, with the first phase occurring prior to substantial completion. Consistent with the discussions at the recent quarterly meetings with Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) held on November 13 and 14, 2017, respectively, and described below, FTA continues our involvement in the safety certification through the Project Management Oversight (PMO) program, oversight of the Tri-State Oversight Committee (TOC), and the certification of the Metrorail Safety Commission (MSC) State Safety Oversight Program.

The safety certification process is a critical component of FTA's PMO program for major capital projects. The PMO program is a continuous review and evaluation of the recipient's processes to ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory, and administrative requirements. The FTA Regional Offices, with the assistance of FTA's PMO contractors (PMOCs), monitor projects following guidelines established by FTA, and evaluate grantee project management and technical capacity and capability to successfully implement major transit projects.

On November 27, 2012, FTA sent a letter to MWAA confirming its approach to oversight for the Dulles project, particularly given it is financed through a U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan. Consistent with the expectations outlined in the letter to MWAA, FTA has assigned a PMOC who is responsible for reviewing the project's Safety and Security Management Plan and the project's readiness to enter revenue service. FTA reviewed the expectations for the oversight reviews with the MWAA and WMATA teams during the quarterly meetings held on November 13 and 14, 2017. As discussed during those meetings, the PMOC will continue to be involved through completion and has developed a phased approach to perform the Readiness to Enter Revenue Operations Review during the Design/Construction, Testing, and Pre-Revenue Operations phases. This phased approach also has been coordinated with other stakeholders, including the existing State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA), the TOC, which is a critical stakeholder in determining the safety readiness of the system.

The FTA is further involved in the safety certification process for the Dulles Project in its role providing temporary direct oversight of the WMATA Metrorail System and its leadership over the TOC. On October 26, 2015, FTA issued Safety Directive 16-1 through which it assumed temporary and direct safety oversight of the WMATA Metrorail system from the TOC. Under Safety Directive 16-1, the TOC remains responsible for compliance with FTA's state safety oversight regulation at 49 C.F.R. Part 659 (Part 659), to include performing oversight duties pertaining to safety and security certification reviews of major capital projects. FTA's WMATA Safety Oversight (FWSO) team provides leadership and general direction to the TOC in its compliance with the requirements of Part 659, including overseeing the results of the TOC's safety and security certification reviews.

The TOC's involvement in the safety and security certification review process is described in detail in the TOC's program standard. TOC began performing safety and security certification oversight of the Silver Line Phase II in 2014 and will continue until FTA and the TOC transition responsibility for the safety oversight to the MSC, without any degradation of effort. FTA, through FWSO, will continue to provide leadership and general direction to the TOC on these activities, while it is responsible for direct safety oversight of WMATA.

Finally, as FTA prepares to transition oversight of the WMATA Metrorail System to the MSC, we remain cognizant of the impact that the change in safety oversight entity may have on the Dulles Project. FTA aims to lead a transition process that ensures safety of the WMATA Metrorail System without causing unnecessary delays to the Dulles Project. Accordingly, FTA will incorporate the phased SSOA safety certification reviews into its transition plan with the MSC. In addition, we want to ensure that WMATA and MWAA plan for the future MSC's program standard under the new requirements for state safety oversight at 49 C.F.R. Part 674 (Part 674). As a part of mobilization of the MSC, WMATA, and MWAA should expect the MSC to share its program standard with both agencies. Once the MSC program is certified, WMATA will be required to comply with the MSC's Part 674 program standard.

To address your request to conduct the PRSR in two parts, FTA confirmed with the TOC that this is an acceptable approach; therefore, the TOC also will recommend this approach to the MSC as part of the transition of its current oversight responsibilities. As noted in your letter and discussed with both entities, based on the current project schedule and when the PRSR is projected to be conducted, the MSC may have achieved FTA certification and, therefore, would be the responsible entity for conducting the PRSR. However, FTA's Region III office, PMOC team, and the recently assigned Regional Safety Officer from FTA's Office of Safety Review will provide continuity for oversight to the project. Further, our goal is to ensure all stakeholders remain actively engaged at critical decision points, particularly during critical work flow paths.

FTA is committed to ensuring the safety of the WMATA Metrorail System and to partnering with you for the safety readiness of the Dulles Project.

If you need additional information or assistance, please feel free to contact Ms. Terry Garcia Crews, FTA's Region III Administrator, at Theresa.GarciaCrews@dot.gov or (215) 656-7263 or Dr. Tom Littleton, Associate Administrator, FTA Transit Safety and Oversight at Thomas.Littleton@dot.gov or (202) 366-1783.

Mr. John Potter
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Jane Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

K. Jane Williams
Acting Administrator

cc: Paul Wiedefeld, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, WMATA
Sharmila Samarasinghe, Chair, Tri-State Oversight Committee