

WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, October 8, 2019  
Location: Ronald F. Kirby Training Center  
777 North Capitol Street NE  
Washington, DC 20002

MINUTES

Agenda Item No.	Items
	<p><b>Attendance.</b> Commissioners present: Chair Christopher Hart, Vice Chair Mark Rosenker, Robert Bobb, Greg Hull and Michael Rush. Via phone: Howard Roberts and John Contestabile. David Mayer was present.</p>
1.	<p><b>Call to Order.</b> WMSC Chair Hart called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was achieved.</p>
2.	<p><b>Public Comments.</b> Chair Hart invited comments from members of the public, but no members of the public rose to speak.</p>
3.	<p><b>Safety Message.</b> WMSC CEO Dr. David Mayer outlined emergency exit procedures for evacuating the Kirby Center.</p>
4.	<p><b>Chair’s Remarks.</b> Chair Hart welcomed attendees to the public meeting and stated that the meeting would concern the following matters: three specific incident investigations, an update on ongoing 2019 audit efforts, and a presentation on safety concerns.</p>
5.	<p><b>CEO’s Remarks.</b> Dr. Mayer provided the following comments:</p> <p>First, Dr. Mayer noted there were a number of issues before the commission and on the agenda that would be addressed later in the meeting.</p> <p>Second, Dr. Mayer discussed a Metrorail safety event from the previous day. He noted that WMSC staff was working side-by-side with WMATA to learn the facts surrounding a collision just outside Farragut West station early Monday morning. Dr. Mayer stressed that the WMSC would continue to actively participate in the investigative process. Dr. Mayer stressed that ultimately the commission would review the quality of WMATA’s investigative report and decide if it was sufficient and thorough enough for the commissioners to adopt; this was one of the commission’s oversight tools. Dr. Mayer</p>

	<p>recapped the key facts known of the previous day's event: two eastbound trains that were not carrying passengers collided between Foggy Bottom and Farragut West stations. Both were 3000-series trains, and, as such, lacked on-board video recordings of the operators. The six-car striking train (#700) collided with a six-car (#755) stationary train. Dr. Mayer noted the investigation was ongoing but the WMSC was looking into many possible factors: scheduling, control issues, fatigue and distraction and any track or structural anomalies.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer noted the additional information that had come to light since the previous day, and Dr. Mayer noted the potential causes that had been ruled out, specifically loss of shunt or ATP malfunction.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer discussed what was known about the operator moving against a zero-speed command. Dr. Mayer discussed rules, policies and Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) that related to such movement, including a CAP dating to 2016. Dr. Mayer discussed the limited extent to which technical measures existed to address such issues. Consequently, Dr. Mayer announced there would be an engineering summit -- or technical meeting -- to be held the following week with certain WMATA and WMSC personnel to discuss possible engineering and technical solutions.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer mentioned the other items that would be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p>Finally, Dr. Mayer mentioned the hiring and onboarding of the WMSC's new signals expert, Ms. Kemmerly Kendrick.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Approval of the minutes of the September 10, 2019 meeting.</b> A motion was made to approve the minutes of September 10, 2019. The motion was seconded.</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> The minutes of the September 10, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Investigations.</b> WMSC COO Sharmila Samarasinghe briefed the WMSC on three investigations:</p> <p>First, E18438, which was an investigation into a customer fatality at Columbia Heights station. On October 10, 2018, a passenger using a wheelchair was fatally injured using an ascending escalator while exiting the Columbia Heights station. The Metrorail equipment involved in the event was inspected by proper authorities, and it was determined to be functioning safely without any anomalies. WMSC staff accepted the findings of the investigation and recommended the investigation be adopted by the commission.</p> <p>Second, E18479, which was an investigation into an employee injury where a track and structures employees sustained broken bones as a result of falling off a piece of equipment. The employee was moving debris from a flatcar to a trash dumpster. He lost his footing and fell several feet. Following this incident, the track department issued an instructional memo to all employees reminding them of the proper use of such storage</p>

	<p>and disposal containers. WMSC staff accepted the findings of the investigation and recommended it be adopted by the commission.</p> <p>Third, E19252, which was an investigation into a train that moved with car doors open departing Dunn Loring Station in May 2019. The train cars on this consist were 3000-series cars. The WMSC subject matter expert for vehicles participated closely in the investigation, which determined that the master controller cam switch shunt, constructed of copper, was fraying at a faster rate than anticipated due to manual operations following the Fort Totten incident in 2009. WMATA initiated a series of testing and protocols until the appropriate fleet cars are overhauled. WMSC staff accepted the findings of the investigation and recommended it be adopted by the commission.</p> <p>ACTION: Motions were individually made and seconded to adopt all three reports. All reports were unanimously adopted.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Corrective Action Plans.</b> Ms. Samarasinghe briefed the WMSC on CAPs.</p> <p>Ms. Samarasinghe stated that 11 of 62 open CAPs would be closed, reducing the number of open CAPs further.</p> <p>Ms. Samarasinghe discussed new CAPs and CAPs that would be re-issued, including CAPs concerning hours of service, staffing in the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC), tracking of safety data of Metrorail assets, and design of the 7000-series operator’s cabs.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer also discussed the WMSC’s management of CAPs and the WMSC’s work to consolidate and restructure them as appropriate, including those related to train-to-train collisions. Dr. Mayer stated that he had asked all WMSC staff to look at all CAPs related to train-to-train collisions and to provide an update to the commission at the November meeting to ensure that activities underway by WMATA are sufficiently aggressive.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Audits.</b> Ms. Samarasinghe briefed the commission on the status of an audit of the track and structures functions at WMATA. The WMSC’s staff had shared the draft of the WMSC’s report with WMATA and was writing a final report integrating any noteworthy feedback from WMATA. Any findings in the report would require Metrorail to propose new CAPs to address such gaps.</p> <p>Mr. Chris DiFatta, the Subject Matter Expert, Operations, and Mr. Bruce Walker, the Operations Program Specialist, presented the commission with an overview of the next audit that WMSC staff will be conducting. The audit will focus on the functional area of roadway worker protection, or RWP. The WMSC will conduct this audit commencing in November 2019.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Safety Concerns.</b> Ms. Samarasinghe briefed the commission on the staff’s handling and actions – consistent with the WMSC’s mission – that were taken in response to safety and non-compliance concerns reported to the WMSC by the public. When the WMSC receives</p>

	<p>such information, regardless of whether the WMSC receives the information through the formal “Report Safety Concerns” feature on the WMSC’s website or through social media, the WMSC tracks such concerns and then works to determine the veracity. The WMSC looks closely at each concern and considers whether further action by WMATA is warranted. If action is warranted, the WMSC will raise the issue with WMATA and take appropriate steps to ensure WMATA addresses the matter.</p> <p>Dr. Mayer also noted the extent to which WMSC staff closely evaluate the concerns and how they bring their expertise to bear to assess concerns. Dr. Mayer noted that for many concerns raised WMSC staff respond directly to the individual who raised the concern.</p> <p>Commissioner Contestabile asked a question about the extent to which contact information of members of the public was captured. WMSC staff responded that such information is requested to ensure WMSC could follow up with any member of the public if necessary, but anonymous reports are accepted.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Resolutions.</b> Chair Hart stated there were no resolutions in need of consideration.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>Closed Meeting.</b> Chair Hart stated that the WMSC Bylaws permit discussion of certain matters in closed, or executive, session; specifically, Section I.G.1(h) of the Bylaws permit the use of a closed meeting for the Commission to discuss WMSC internal personnel matters. In accordance with Section 5 U.S.C. § 552b(f), Chair Hart requested that counsel certify that, in her opinion, the meeting could be closed to the public and to publicly state the applicable exempting provision of the Sunshine Act.</p> <p>WMSC counsel Allison Fultz stated such exempting provision: 5 U.S.C. § 552b(c)(2) relating solely to internal personnel practices of the agency.</p> <p>Chair Hart stated that pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552b(d), a majority of commissioners would be required to vote to enter into executive session, i.e., to have a closed meeting.</p> <p>Chair Hart further stated that, as the meeting was nearing the end of the public portion of the agenda, he would be asking for two votes:</p> <p>The first vote would be to enter into executive session. A motion was made and seconded. The motion passed. Chair Hart and Commissioners Rosenker, Hull, Roberts and Bobb voted to enter into executive session.</p> <p>A second vote would be to adjourn immediately if there was no vote to enter into executive session. (This vote was deemed moot considering the previous vote.)</p> <p>Another vote was requested to adjourn the meeting at the end of the closed portion of the meeting. A motion was made and seconded.</p> <p>The public meeting entered closed, or executive, session.</p>

	The meeting adjourned at the conclusion of the closed, or executive, session.
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