

WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, September 22, 2020

Location: This meeting was conducted remotely as a publicly-streamed video conference

MINUTES

Agenda Item #	Items
Attendance	Commissioners present: Members: Chair Christopher Hart, Commissioners Robert Bobb, Debra Farrar-Dyke, John Contestabile, Greg Hull, Alternate Commissioners: Michael Rush, Suhair Al Khatib, Victoria Wassmer. Rush was the only Alternate Commissioner voting. All WMSC Staff and members of the public also present.
1.	Call to Order. WMSC Hart, called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Roll call was taken by Allison Fultz, WMSC General Counsel, and a quorum was achieved.
2.	Safety Message. Richard David, Program Specialist focusing on safety, spoke about National Preparedness month and what that means in 2020.
3.	Approval of the minutes of the June 18, 2020 meeting. Debra Farrar-Dyke, WMSC Secretary/Treasurer: Farrar-Dyke moved a motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020 public meeting. Bobb seconded the motion. <u>ACTION:</u> The minutes of the August 4, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved. General Counsel Allison Fultz conducted the roll call vote.
4.	Public Comments. Hart invited comments from members of the public who had joined the webinar audience. There were no public comments.
5.	Chair’s Remarks. Hart gave an overview of the meeting, noting the Board would discuss the results of several safety investigations, receive an update on Metrorail’s development of corrective action plans related to the Rail Operations Control Center (“ROCC”), and receive other updates on the WMSC’s ongoing inspection and oversight work. He also noted that the WMSC Finance & Operations Committee successfully began the WMSC’s first independent financial audit as required by the WMSC Compact.

6.	<p>CEO's Remarks. Dr. David Mayer, WMSC CEO, spoke about the WMSC's audit of the ROCC and the next steps with respect to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ("WMATA") proposing corrective actions. He then updated the Board about the WMSC's investigation of the July 7 derailment near the Silver Spring station and other WMSC activities, including the WMSC's participation in an after-action review hosted by WMATA that included Montgomery County Fire & Rescue, other investigations, and the WMSC's work with WMATA in the implementation of the latter's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.</p>
7.	<p>Consent Agenda. Hart</p> <p>Report W-0044 covered an individual intentionally placing himself on the tracks in front of a moving train. Although by FTA regulations this is classified as an "accident," the events were not accidental, and the situation presented no safety issues beyond those relating to the involved individual.</p> <p>Rush moved to approve the consent agenda and Hull seconded. The agenda was adopted unanimously.</p>
8.	<p>Safety Investigations. JeMayne Walker, Subject Matter Expert for Track and Structures; Adam Quigley, Program Specialist.</p> <p>Report W-0045 covered a serious contractor injury that occurred at the Vienna Station on May 1, 2020. The investigation into this event identified several OSHA violations and other concerns. Metrorail did not confirm that proper OSHA-compliant procedures and safeguards were in place for this work on Metrorail property. The scaffolding did not comply with multiple OSHA requirements. There were also no ventilation or exhaust controls in the enclosed area, which violated other OSHA requirements. The contractor that was responsible for this work committed to re-evaluating its work plans.</p> <p>Bobb moved to approve Report W-0045, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0045.</p> <p>Report W-0046 covered a collision and derailment in the Alexandria Rail Yard on February 10, 2020. This investigation found that those involved in the event also did not properly coordinate power removal, did not follow proper radio protocols, and did not take action to prevent the collision. A lack of adequate supervision of Interlocking Operators within Metrorail contributed to this event, including allowing for distractions like watching a movie trailer while on duty. Metrorail has conducted a safety stand-down for interlocking operators and tower supervisors. The topics included proper radio communications, policies barring use of computers and electronic devices in a way that could cause distraction, and the procedures for movement of vehicles in the yard. The interlocking operator and train operator also received refresher training. We at the WMSC have planned additional inspections of yard operations</p> <p>Hull moved to approve W-0046, with Farrar-Dyke seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0046.</p>

	<p>Report W-0047 covered a significant event on February 14, 2020 where Train 910, a train carrying passengers, was routed into an area where third rail power had been taken down for safety reasons. The ROCC did not properly protect the area. This event involved procedural noncompliance and emergency response deficiencies that put employees and customers at risk of collision or electrocution. The investigation identified incorrect use of automatic signal routing and a lack of required radio announcements regarding the initial collision that could have prevented the operator of the misrouted train from entering the area where power had been taken down. Metrorail does not use any automatic, redundant protection features of the Advanced Information Management System to keep trains out of areas where power has been taken down. Following this event, the ROCC staff involved were not removed from service for post-incident testing as required. Metrorail only removed the operator of Train 909, the train involved in the initial collision in the station, for drug and alcohol testing. The operator of train 910 was not removed for required testing. WMATA’s Safety Department was also not aware of the train sent onto dead rail or the potentially dangerous power restoration until the WMSC notified them of the facts that we identified through our own, independent work. ROCC management did not include information about these aspects of the event in its reports to SAFE.</p> <p>Rush moved to approve W-0047, with Hart seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0047.</p> <p>Report W-0048 covered a March 14, 2019 event on the Red Line, where a Metrorail customer who had been wandering the Fort Totten Station for more than two hours used a platform end gate to access the Red Line roadway. Approximately 24 minutes after entering the roadway, the customer was struck by an inbound train. The train operator informed the Rail Operations Control Center, the ROCC deenergized third rail power, and the train operator left the cab and entered the roadway to check on the person who had been struck and was subsequently discovered to have died. The train operator did not make PA announcements to passengers on the train before entering the roadway. While the train operator was on the roadway, the train operator saw that passengers on the train had begun moving between cars using the end-doors. When the train operator got back on the train, passengers said several other riders had self-evacuated through the side emergency door. Based on station CCTV footage and Metro Transit Police information, 16 passengers self-evacuated, while 59 remained on the train. The Station Manager at Fort Totten was not notified about the collision until Transit Police arrived at the station shortly after 10:30 p.m. This event highlighted the importance of clear communication to customers, and the importance of vigilance on and around Metrorail property. If customers, employees, or others had identified that this person was wandering the station for two hours, it is possible that the fatal collision could have been avoided. The report expressed that Metrorail could consider additional measures, such as alarms or locks, to ensure that only authorized personnel access the roadway through platform endgates. If communication to passengers had been clearer, it is possible that the self-evacuation could have been avoided.</p> <p>Hull moved to approve W-0048, with Farrar-Dyke seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the motion to approve Report W-0048.</p>
9.	<p>Audits. Hart; Sharmila Samarasinghe, WMSC COO</p>

	<p>Hart discussed the ROCC audit report the WMSC recently released. Samarasinghe updated the Board on the status of the audit, noting WMATA had until October 23 to produce its corrective actions relating to the WMSC’s audit findings. Samarasinghe also noted that the WMSC had released the Roadway Worker Protection Audit, for which WMATA has not yet proposed corrective actions deemed acceptable by the WMSC, and the Track Maintenance & Training Audit, for which the WMSC has approved WMATA’s proposed corrective actions.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Resolutions. Hart</p> <p>WMSC-R-2020-08 amended the Bylaws to streamline, simplify and clarify them to help the WMSC operate in the most efficient manner. Hart noted the original bylaws were adopted by the Board in March 2018 before any WMSC staff had been hired. After two years of operation, Hart said the WMSC is better able to use its operational experience to revise the bylaws to better suit the needs of the WMSC.</p> <p>Bobb moved the motion to approve WMSC-R-2020-08, with Farrar-Dyke seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt WMSC-R-2020-08.</p> <p>WMSC-R-2020-09 amended the WMSC’s Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) Policy. Hart noted the change would help clarify the internal processes for responding to FOIA requests.</p> <p>Hull moved the motion to approve WMSC-R-2020-09, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted to adopt WMSC-R-2020-09.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Adjourn. Christopher Hart, WMSC Chair</p> <p>Hart noted that the next WMSC public meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, 2020.</p> <p>Farrar-Dyke moved the motion to adjourn, with Rush seconding it. By voice vote, the Board unanimously voted adjourn at 1:35 p.m.</p>