



WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0124 – Evacuation for Life-Safety Reasons – Federal Center SW Station – June 25, 2021

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on October 26, 2021

Safety event summary:

A Metrorail rider reported to the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) that they heard another customer on their train say the word “bomb”.

Metrorail held the train at Federal Center SW Station, offloaded the train, and evacuated the station for life-safety reasons.

MTPD identified the customer who was reported to have said the word bomb had exited the train at Metro Center and transferred to the Red Line. Following a report that a person matching the description had been at Brookland Station, they later contacted the person at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center and determined that there was no evidence of any explosives or other threat to the Metrorail system.

Probable Cause:

The probable cause of this evacuation was a customer reporting hearing the word “bomb” on a train.

Corrective Actions:

No corrective actions were identified during this investigation.

Staff recommendation: Adopt final report.



Washington Metro Area Transit Authority
Department of Safety and Environmental
Management (SAFE)

FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I E21260

Date of Event:	6/25/2021
Type of Event:	A-4 Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons
Incident Time:	0855 hours
Location:	Federal Center SW
Time and How received by SAFE:	0916 hours Incident Management Officer (IMO)
WMSC Notification Time:	1046 hours
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA SAFE: No WMSC: No Other: N/A
Rail Vehicle:	Train ID 603 7158-59x7645-44x7006-07x7599-98
Injuries:	None
Damage:	None
Emergency Responders:	Office of Rail Transportation (RTRA) and Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20210626#94116MX

Federal Center SW – Improper RWP Protection
June 25, 2021

Table of Contents

Executive Summary 4
Incident Site 4
Purpose and Scope 5
Investigation Process and Methods 5
Investigation Methods 5
Investigation 6
 Chronological Event Timeline..... 6
 Metro Transit Police Department Report..... 8
Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence 8
Investigative Findings 8
Weather 8
Human Factors 9
Probable Cause 9
Recommendations/Corrective Actions 9

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ARS	Audio Recording Service
CID	Criminal Investigation Division
I/A	Incidents and Accidents
MTPD	Metro Transit Police Department
MSRPH	Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OSC	On-scene Commander
ROCC	Rail Operations Control Center
ROIC	Rail Operations Information Center
RTC	Rail Traffic Controller
RTRA	Office of Rail Transportation
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SMS	Safety Measurement System
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Executive Summary

On Friday, June 25, 2021, at 08:55 hours, Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) received a call from a customer traveling the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA) system aboard Train ID 603 (7158-59x7645-44x7006-07x7599-98) that they heard another customer mention the word "bomb."

MTPD held the consist at Federal Center SW Station, offloaded the customers onboard Train ID 603, and evacuated the station for life safety reasons while they conducted their investigation.

ROCC implemented Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) 1A at approximately 09:15 hours.

MTPD tracked down the customer aboard Train ID 603 that matched the description from the reporting passenger boarding a shuttle to Veterans Hospital. The customer reported they never said the word "Bomb" but did say the word "Bowl," referencing a family member that recently passed.

WMSC released the scene, and the consist pending MTPD finding no evidence of explosives or hazardous substances at approximately 09:18 hours. MTPD authorized ROCC to single-track between Smithsonian Station and Federal Center SW Station via Track 2. ROCC single-tracked trains via Track 2 to mitigate customer delays at approximately 09:21 hours. The Station Manager reported all customers were clear of Federal Center SW Station at approximately 09:27 hours.

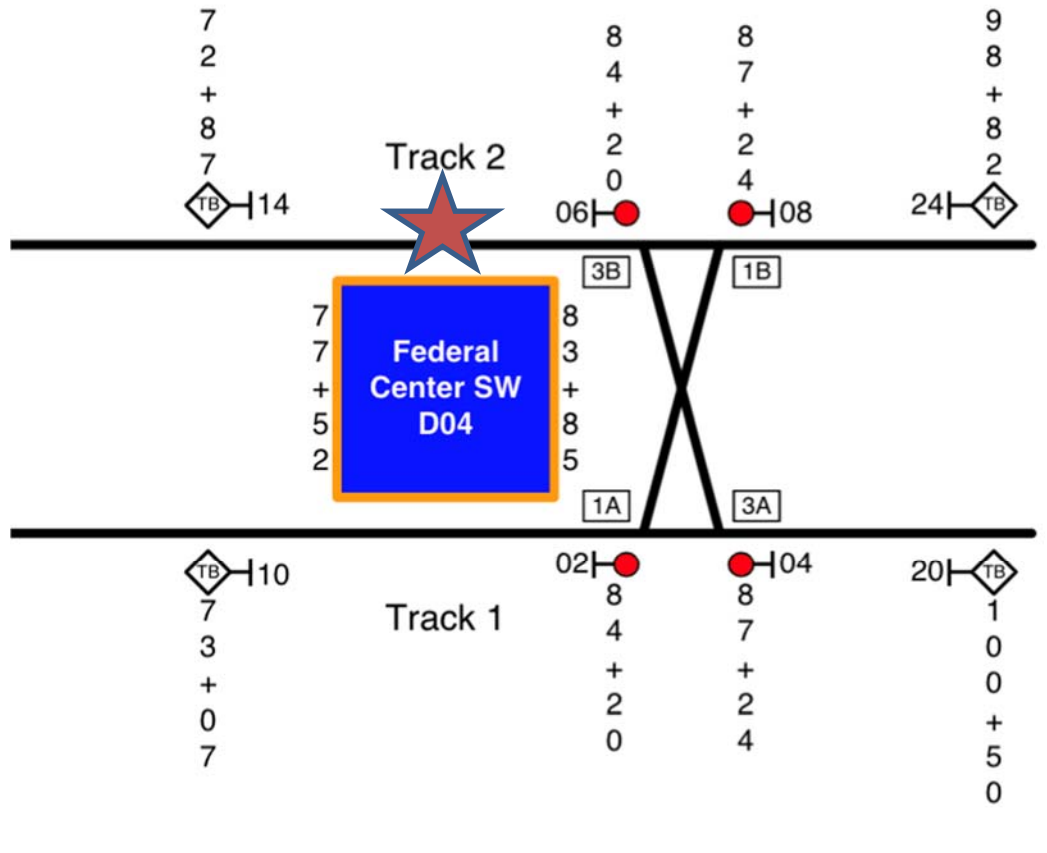
After MTPD concluded their investigation, they did not find evidence of any explosives or hazardous substances and declared the consist and the station safe for revenue service. The Station Manager received authorization from MTPD and the ROIC Specialist to reopen Federal Center SW Station at approximately 09:33 hours. ROCC terminated the single-track operation at approximately 09:34 hours.

Based on a review of Audio Recording System (ARS) playback, there does not appear to be any non-compliance to the rules and procedures.

Incident Site

Federal Center SW, Track 2

Field Sketch/Schematics



Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this incident investigation and candid self-evaluation is to collect and analyze available facts, determine the probable cause(s) of the incident, identify contributing factors, and make recommendations to prevent a recurrence.

Investigation Process and Methods

Upon receiving notification of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Federal Center SW Station on June 25, 2021, SAFE launched an investigation into this event. SAFE team members worked with relevant Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) subject matter experts to review the incident's facts and data.

Investigation Methods

The investigative methodologies included the following:

- Formal Interview – No interviews were conducted related to this event.
- Documentation Review – A collection of relevant work history information and process documentation contained in Metro systems of record. These records include:
 - MTPD Incident Investigation Report review
 - Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRPH)
 - Rail Operations Control (ROC) summary report review

- System Data Recording Review – A collection of information in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
 - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback [Phone Communications and Radio]

Investigation

On Friday, June 25, 2021, at approximately 08:55 hours, MTPD received a call from a customer traveling the WMATA system aboard Train ID 603 they heard another customer mention the word “bomb.”

MTPD held the consist at Federal Center SW Station, offloaded the customers onboard Train ID 603, and evacuated the station for life safety reasons while they conducted their investigation. ROCC implemented SOP 1A at approximately 09:15 hours.

MTPD tracked down the customer aboard Train ID 603 that matched the description from the reporting passenger boarding a shuttle to Veterans Hospital. The customer reported they never said the word "Bomb" but did say the word "Bowl," referencing a family member that recently passed. WMSC personnel released the scene, and the consist pending that MTPD did not identify any explosives or hazardous substances at approximately 09:18 hours. MTPD authorized single-tracking between Smithsonian Station and Federal Center SW Station via Track 2. ROCC single-tracked trains via Track 2 to mitigate customer delays at approximately 09:21 hours. The Station Manager reported all customers were clear of Federal Center SW Station at approximately 09:27 hours.

After MTPD concluded their investigation, they did not find any explosives or hazardous substances and declared the train and the station safe for revenue service. The Station Manager received authorization from MTPD and the ROIC Specialist to reopen Federal Center SW Station at approximately 09:33 hours. ROCC terminated the single-track operation at approximately 09:34 hours.

Based on a review of ARS playback, there does not appear to be any non-compliance to the rules and procedures.

Chronological Event Timeline

A review of Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) ARS playback, i.e., phone and radio communications, revealed the following:

Time	Description
08:55 hours	MTPD received a call from a passenger reporting a customer mentioned the word bomb on Train ID 603
09:06 hours	ROCC IMO reported a Bomb Threat on board Train ID 603 at Federal Center SW track # 1 and requested for the train to hold on the platform.

Time	Description
09:10 hours	ROCC Radio RTC instructed Train ID 603 to offload and verify clear of customers and be governed by MTPD. MTPD gave ROCC permission to single track utilizing track# 2.
09:12 hours	Train ID 603 Train Operator reported MTPD is on the scene and conducting their investigation.
09:15 hours	ROCC instructed Trains 413, at Smithsonian, and 906, at L'Enfant Plaza, to offload and have incident customers step over to track two and continue in service towards New Carrollton and Largo Town Center.
09:15 hours	The Radio RTC implemented SOP 1A and assigned RTRA Supervisor Unit 14 the On-Scene Commander (OSC) upon arrival.
09:18 hours	WMSC released the scene, and the consist pending that MTPD did not identify any explosives or hazardous substances.
09:18 hours	The Radio RTC made announcements to ensure proper announcements are made to your customers, and that Federal Center is closed due to police activity.
09:21 hours	Train ID 604 was the first train to single track utilizing track two from Smithsonian to Federal Center, picking up incident customers in Largo Town Center's direction.
09:27 hours	<p><u>Station Manager Mezzanine 58:</u> notified the ROIC specialist the station had been evacuated and requested an update on the bus shuttle.</p> <p><u>ROIC specialist:</u> Shuttle buses have been requested.</p>
09:29 hours	ROCC IMO reported the MTPD investigation was completed, and MTPD released the Train ID 603 for revenue service.
09:33 hours	<p><u>Station Manager Mezzanine 58:</u> notified the ROIC specialist that the MTPD stated the scene was clear and could reopen the station.</p> <p><u>ROIC specialist:</u> Gave Station Manager Mezzanine 58 permission to reopen the station. OPS 5</p>
09:34 hours	Train ID 603 was put back in service at Federal Center SW and continued in revenue service to Largo Town Center Train ID 413, and 906 were put back in revenue service and continued to their proper destinations. Normal service resumed.

Note: Times above may vary from other system's timelines based on clock settings.

Metro Transit Police Department Report

The Reporting Person reported on 06/25/2021, on or about 08:55 hours, while aboard Train ID 603, rail car 7645, they observed a male talking to himself and hearing the word "Bomb" at least once. The Reporting Officer met with the reporting person at the McPherson Square Station. The Reporting Person provided the Reporting Officer with a picture of the man. The Reporting Person was unable to provide any more than just hearing the word "BOMB." An MTPD officer forwarded the photographs to the Criminal Investigation Division (CID). Detective K-9 Officer swept the station with nothing found.

MTPD officers spoke with patrons at Metro Center who stated the man boarded a red line train. MTPD officers responded for a radio run for a disorderly at the Brookland Station. The disorderly man matched the lookout for the subject talking to himself and made a reference to a bomb aboard a train. The man boarded a shuttle to Veterans Hospital. MTPD Officers contacted the man at the Veterans Hospital and identified the man. The customer stated they had PTSD and had recently had a death in the family. The customer said they were crying aboard the train and became angry when some people made fun of them. The customer reported they never said the word "Bomb" but did the word "Bowl," which was about the family member who had recently died.

No threat to the train, Metro, or passengers could be established.

Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence

- MTPD Federal Center Station was evacuated and closed for Life Safety Reasons
- Train ID 603 Train Operator offloaded customers onto the platform.
- MTPD officers swept the train and stations.

Investigative Findings

- MTPD received a call from a passenger reporting a customer mentioned the word bomb on Train ID 603
- The Radio RTC implemented SOP 1A and assigned RTRA Supervisor Unit 14 the OSC upon arrival.
- The Mezzanine 58 Station Manager reported Federal Center SW Station was evacuated.
- After sweeping the station and making contact with the alleged subject, MTPD gave the Station Manager authorization to reopen Federal Center SW Station
- MTPD spoke with the alleged subject stating the word bomb. The subject reported they never said the word "Bomb."
- MTPD concluded their investigation; they did not find any explosives or hazardous substances and declared the consist and the station safe for revenue service.
- SAFE did not identify any non-compliance to the rules and procedures.

Weather

At the time of the incident, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recorded the temperature as 82°F and clear. SAFE has concluded that weather was not a contributing factor in this incident (Weather source: NOAA – Location: Washington, DC.)

Human Factors

No human factors contributed to the incident response portion of this event.

Probable Cause

The probable cause for the Federal Center SW station evacuation on Jun 25, 2021, resulted from a customer report of another passenger using the term “bomb” while onboard a train. This notification prompted a MTPD response and subsequent evacuation of the station for precautionary reasons.

MTPD concluded their investigation; they did not find any explosives or hazardous substances and declared the scene safe for revenue service. No threat to the train, Metro, or passengers could be established.

Recommendations/Corrective Actions

There are no recommendations or corrective actions for the evacuation for life safety reasons event. There were no deficiencies identified for the incident response or lapse in safety procedures.