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WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0160 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons – Crystal City Station – December 25, 2021

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on April 12, 2022

#### Safety event summary:

On December 25, 2021, at 8:20 p.m., MTPD contacted the Ops 3 Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) requesting Crystal City Station be closed due to the report of a possible bomb threat.

The Controller relayed the information to the ROCC Assistant Operations Manager (AOM). At 8:21 p.m., a Rail Operations Information Center (ROIC) Controller contacted the station manager to instruct them to evacuate and close the station. The station manager reported to ROCC that they had already been provided those instructions by an MTPD officer on the scene. At 8:22 p.m., MTPD also notified the ROCC AOM, who asked whether trains should bypass the station and MTPD confirmed that trains could bypass Crystal City Station. The Ops 3 RTC instructed train operators to bypass the station via radio. Trains began bypassing the station at 8:26 p.m., MTPD established Incident Command in the bus bay at 8:27 p.m. and the station was reported clear of all customers at 8:29 p.m.

A person of interest was identified and determined not to be a threat. The MTPD K-9 Unit completed a search of the station and no suspicious or hazardous materials were found. The station reopened and normal train service resumed at Crystal City Station at approximately 9:27 p.m.

#### **Probable Cause:**

The probable cause of this evacuation for life safety reasons was the report of a bomb threat at Crystal City Station.

#### WMSC staff observations:

WMATA should ensure MTPD Communications Division personnel are trained to clearly communicate all pertinent details and indicate whether trains should bypass a station or if service should be suspended when making a request for the ROCC to close a station.

Staff recommendation: Adopt final report.



# Washington Metro Area Transit Authority Department of Safety and Environmental Management (SAFE) FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I E21675

Date of Event:	12/25/2021		
Type of Event:	Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons		
Incident Time:	20:16 hours.		
Location:	Crystal City Station		
Time and How received by SAFE:	20:17 hours. SAFE/IMO In-Person Notification		
WMSC Notification Time:	21:44 hours.		
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA SAFE: No		
	WMSC: No		
	Other: N/A		
Rail Vehicle:	N/A		
Injuries:	No		
Damage:	No		
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20220225#98637		

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#### Crystal City Station Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons December 25, 2021

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#### **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

AIMS Advanced Information Management System

ARS Audio Recording System

**CM** Chain Marker

**COMR** Office of Systems Maintenance, Office of Radio Communications

ESR Event Scene Release

ICP Incident Command Post

ICS Incident Command System

IMO Incident Management Official

MSRPH Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook

MTPD Metro Transit Police Department

NIMS National Incident Management System

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

SAFE Department of Safety and Environmental Management

SMS I/A Safety Measurement System Incidents/Accidents

**SOP** Standard Operating Procedure

WMATA Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

WMSC Washington Metrorail Safety Commission

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## Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Department of Safety & Environmental Management

#### **Executive Summary**

On December 25, 2021, at approximately 20:20 hours, the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) was notified by the Metro Transit Police Department's (MTPD) Communication Division of a Bomb Threat at Crystal City Station. MTPD Communication Division requested to close the station so that MTPD could sweep for any hazardous materials and instructed the ROCC to bypass Crystal City Station. The ROCC then initiated emergency notifications to the respective internal departments. The call originated at approximately 20:16 hours, when the Fairfax County Police Department received a call from a person who made a bomb threat at Crystal City Station. This information was passed onto Arlington Virginia Police Department, then to MTPD. At approximately 20:25 hours, MTPD reported that the Crystal City Station Manager had closed the gate to the station.

At approximately 20:22 hours, the ROCC Radio Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) alerted all Ops 3 Train Operators, instructing them to bypass Crystal City Station, Track 1, and Track 2 due to police activity. As a result, the ROCC requested shuttle bus services from Pentagon City to National Airport Station since trains were bypassing Crystal City Station. The Advanced Information Management System (AIMS) playback revealed that at approximately 20:26 hours, revenue Train ID 303 was the first train to bypass Crystal City Station.

At approximately 20:45 hours, MTPD Digital Video Evidence Unit (DVEU) issued a "be on the lookout" alert for a possible person of interest. At approximately 20:47 hours, the person was identified and determined to not be a threat. At approximately 20:57 hours, the Office of Rail Transportation (RTRA) Supervisor One reported they were on scene with RTRA Supervisor Two and MTPD. The ROCC Radio RTC appointed the RTRA Supervisor One as the RTRA Forward Liaison after MTPD assumed the On-Scene Commander (OSC) responsibilities. At approximately 21:09 hours, MTPD K-9 Unit completed a search of the station for any suspicious devices and found no evidence of hazardous material. As a result, the MTPD OSC determined that the station was safe and could be reopened for revenue service at approximately 21:19 hours. MTPD turned the incident scene over to RTRA personnel and departed at approximately 21:24 hours. See Appendix A.

There were no injuries or equipment damage reported due to this incident. The ROCC resumed regular rail service at approximately 21:24 hours. AIMS playback revealed that at approximately 21:27 hours, revenue Train ID 306 was the first train to service Crystal City Station, Track 2.

After reviewing the ARS, there did not appear to be any radio communication deficiencies. On Saturday, December 25, 2021, at approximately 21:11 hours, SAFE's IMO notified the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) and received authorization for an Event Scene Release (ESR).

The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event was a reported Bomb Threat at Crystal City Station. MTPD investigation concluded this was not viable threat. No significant safety concerns were identified with the response and station evacuation.

#### Incident Site

Crystal City Station

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#### Field Sketch/Schematics

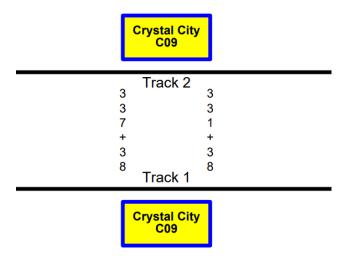


Figure 1 – The Crystal City Station Map.

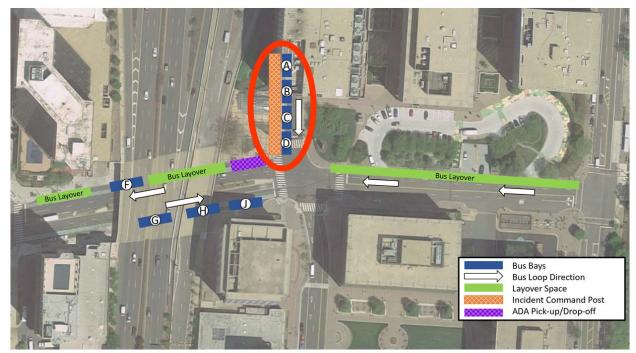


Figure 2 – This illustration represents the Crystal City Station bus bay layout and where the Incident Command Post was located in the bus bay.

#### 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.

#### **Investigative Methods**

The investigative methodologies included the following:

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- Formal Interviews SAFE did not conduct any interviews as part of this investigation.
- Documentation Review A collection of relevant work history information and process documentation in Metro systems of record. These records include:
  - Office of Systems Maintenance, Office of Radio Communications (COMR)
  - Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Hot Wash Report
  - Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRPH)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) Procedures Manual
  - Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) Incident Report
- System Data Recording Review A collection of information contained in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
  - Advanced Information Management System (AIMS) playback
  - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback [Radio and Phone Communications]

#### Investigation

On December 25, 2021, at 20:20 hours, the ROCC was notified by the MTPD Communication Division of a Bomb Threat at Crystal City Station. MTPD Communication Division requested to close the station so that MTPD K-9 Unit can sweep for any bombs and explosives. In addition, MTPD Communication Division instructed the ROCC to have trains bypass Crystal City Station. The ROCC initiated emergency notifications to the respective internal departments. At approximately 21:09 hours, MTPD K-9 Unit searched the station for any suspicious devices and found no evidence of a bomb. As a result, MTPD OSC deemed the station was safe and could be reopened for revenue service at approximately 21:19 hours. MTPD turned the incident scene over to RTRA personnel and departed at approximately 21:24 hours. There were no injuries or equipment damage reported due to this incident. The ROCC resumed regular rail service at 21:24 hours. AIMS playback revealed that at approximately 21:27 hours, revenue Train ID 306 was the first train to service Crystal City Station, Track 2. MTPD's investigation identified the person that made the bomb threat and concluded they were experiencing a mental health episode at the time of the event.

#### **Chronological Event Timeline**

Time	Description
20:20:27 hours	MTPD Communication Division: Contacted the ROCC RTC and stated
	they received a report of a possible bomb threat at Crystal City Station and
	requested to close the station.
	ROCC RTC: Acknowledged. [Phone]
20:20:54 hours	ROCC RTC: Contacted the ROCC Assistant Operations Manager (AOM)
	and indicated that they received a report from MTPD of a possible bomb
	threat at Crystal City Station, and they requested to close the station.
	ROCC AOM: Acknowledged. [Phone]

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Time	Description
20:21:01 hours	MTPD Communication Division: Contacted the ROCC AOM and stated
	they received a report of a possible bomb threat at Crystal City Station and
	requested to close the station so that the MTPD K-9 Unit can search the
	station.
	ROCC AOM: Responded "do you want trains to bypass the station?"
	MTPD Communication Division: Responded "yes trains can bypass
	Crystal City Station." [Phone]
20:21:44 hours	ROIC: Notified the Crystal City Station Manager and reported MTPD was
	en route to their kiosk.
	<u>Crystal City Station Manager:</u> Responded "they already came to the kiosk,
	reported a possible bomb threat, and requested to close the station. The
	Crystal City Station Manager stated that MTPD instructed them to
	evacuate the station."
	ROIC: Acknowledged. [Phone]
20:22:23 hours	ROCC Radio RTC: Alerted all Ops 3 Train Operators and reported that
	until further notice, all trains would be bypassing Crystal City Station,
	Tracks 1 and 2 due to police activity at Crystal Station. [Ops 3]
20:30:34 hours	ROCC Radio RTC: Contacted RTRA Supervisor One and reported SOP
	1A was in effect at Crystal City Station, and RTRA Supervisor One will be
	appointed as the OSC upon arrival.
	RTRA Supervisor One: Acknowledged. [Ops 3]
20:31:08 hours	Crystal City Station Manager: Informed the Rail Operations Information
	Center (ROIC) that MTPD had taken over and instructed them to leave the
	station until further notice. [Ops. 5]
20:39:43 hours	ROCC Radio RTC: Contacted the RTRA Supervisor Two and indicated
	that RTRA Supervisor Two will be appointed as the RTRA Forward Liaison
	upon arrival, and the Incident Command Post was established at Crystal
	City Station Metrobus Bay.
	RTRA Supervisor Two: Acknowledged. [Ops 3]
20:57:56 hours	RTRA Supervisor One: Contacted the ROCC Radio RTC and reported
	they are on scene with RTRA Supervisor Two and MTPD.
	ROCC Radio RTC: Appointed the RTRA Supervisor One as the RTRA
	Forward Liaison, as MTPD was acting as the OSC. [Ops 3]
21:02:15 hours	RTRA Supervisor One: Contacted the ROCC Radio RTC and reported that
	the OSC was MTPD Sergeant [NAME] and MTPD was waiting on a K-9
	Unit to sweep the station for bombs and explosives. [Ops 3]
21:11:51 hours	RTRA Supervisor One: Contacted the ROCC Radio RTC and reported that
	the MTPD K-9 Unit was deployed at Crystal City Station, searched, and
	cleared the station. MTPD is now walking through the station and
	conducting an inspection.
04.04.54 5	ROCC Radio RTC: Acknowledged. [Ops 3]
21:24:51 hours	RTRA Supervisor One: Contacted the ROCC Radio RTC and reported that
	MTPD deemed Crystal City Station safe and can be reopened for revenue
	service.
	ROCC Radio RTC: Acknowledged. [Ops 3]

\*Note: Times listed may conflict slightly with other systems of record due to clock settings

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#### **Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)**

The MTPD report revealed that at approximately 20:16 hours, the Fairfax County Police Department received a call from a person who claimed a bomb threat at Crystal City Station. This information was passed onto Arlington Virginia Police Department, then to MTPD. At approximately 20:20 hours, MTPD reported to the ROCC that they were evacuating and closing the station and requested to have trains bypass the station. At approximately 20:25 hours, MTPD reported that the Crystal City Station Manager had closed the gate to the station. At approximately 20:26 hours, the SAFE IMO requested a location for the Incident Command Post, and MTPD reported that the Incident Command Post was established on the station's exterior. At approximately 20:29 hours, all customers and the station manager were safely evacuated. At approximately 20:45 hours, DVEU issued a lookout alert for a possible person of interest. At approximately 20:47 hours, the person was identified and determined to not be threat. At approximately 21:09 hours, MTPD K-9 Unit searched the station for any suspicious devices and found no evidence of a bomb. As a result, MTPD OSC deemed the station safe and could be reopened for revenue service at approximately 21:19 hours. MTPD turned the incident scene over to RTRA personnel and departed at approximately 21:24 hours. See Appendix A.

#### Office of System Maintenance, Office of Radio Communications (COMR)

COMM personnel performed a comprehensive radio operational test at Crystal City Station, Tracks 1 and 2. The test was successful, and the signal was at an optimal level.

**Note:** After reviewing the Audio Recording System playback, there did not appear to be any communication deficiencies over the radio.

#### <u>Advanced Information Management System (AIMS)</u>

The images below depict the ROCC AIMS screen display during the incident sequence. These images are enlargements of a small portion of a controller's display screen and thus do not represent the actual view available to the ROCC controller.

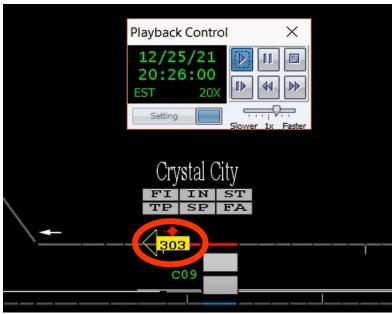


Figure 3 - Based on the AIMS playback, Train ID 303 was the first train to bypass Crystal City Station Track 2 in the direction of Huntington at 20:26:00 hours.

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Figure 4 – Based on the AIMS playback, Train ID 306 was the first train to service Crystal City Station Track 2 at 21:27:40 hours.

#### **Weather**

At the time of the incident, NOAA recorded the temperature at 63° F, mostly cloudy and 60% humidity. Weather was not a contributing factor in this event. (Weather source: National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration – Location: Arlington, VA.)

#### **Investigative Findings**

- MTPD established Incident Command at 20:27 hours at Crystal City Station Metrobus Bay.
- At approximately 20:29 hours, all customers and the station manager were safely evacuated from the station.
- MTPD personnel and a K-9 unit searched the station for any suspicious devices and found no evidence.
- MTPD terminated Incident Command at 21:24 hours.

#### **Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence**

 MTPD evacuated and closed Crystal City Station to sweep the station for hazardous materials and conduct their investigation.

#### **Probable Cause Statement**

The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event was a reported Bomb Threat at Crystal City Station. MTPD investigation concluded this was not viable threat. No significant safety concerns were identified with the response and station evacuation.

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#### **SAFE Recommendations/Corrective Actions**

There are no recommendations for this event as it was precipitated by a criminal action. At the time of this report, no new corrective actions were identified to the evacuation procedure and response coordination with emergency responders.

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#### **Appendices**

#### Appendix A - MTPD Hot Wash Report



#### **Metro Transit Police Department** Hot Wash Summary



#### **ADMINISTRATION HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS**

This report will be completed after a debriefing or "hot wash" in accordance with applicable department policies/directives and procedures; at the request of the Chief of Police or designee or following any incident or event requiring the activation of the Incident Command System (ICS). The purpose of the report is to provide information, assess response, identify training, equipment needs, and to identify areas that may require improvement. After completion of this report, it should be forwarded to the Deputy Chief through the chain of command for review.

This report and any attachments are classified as For Official Use Only. This report may be used for emergency incidents, special events, and exercises. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) will be completed by the last official designated as the Incident Commander (IC) as there may be more than one IC during the incident.

	The second secon	A STREET OF THE PARTY OF THE PA	SUMMARY	
Incident Requiring ICS	Activation:	Bomb Thre	eat	
*Incident Commander (IC): Sergeant				
MTPD CCN:	2021-06196		Local CCN:	N/A
*Date ICS Initiated:	12/25/2021		*Time ICS Initiated:	2016
*Date ICS Terminated:	12/25/2021		*Time ICS Terminated:	2124
*Duration of	1 Hour 8 mir	nutes	*Service Disrupted	Yes Bypass Station
Incident:			(Type and Time):	1 hour 8 minutes
Incident	Crystal City	metr0	Command Post	Bus bay Crstal city
Location:	Rail		Location:	metro
MTPD On-Scene	Sgt		Command Aid	N/A
Commander (OSC):			for OSC:	
Forward Liaison:	N/A		Unified Command;	N/A
OCC Liaison:			Alternate Channel:	YES MTPD 2X
Single Tracking	NO		Bus Bridge Established	NO
(Time & Track No.);			(From /To):	
Inner and/or	N/A		Power	NO
Outer Perimeter:			De-energized:	
OSC Relinquished			Medical Attention	NO
Scene Command to	Rail	Supervisor	Required/Requested:	
Name				
Dept: RAIL				

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Entry/Exit Log:	YES	CID Response:	NO	
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MTPD MTPD MTPD MTPD	
MTPD	Scene Security/ Crowd Control
	Scene Security/ Crowd Control
MTPD	0 0 110 10 1
	Scene Security/ Crowd Control
MTPD	On Scene Command
MTPD	Watch Commander
MTPD	K9 UNIT
RAIL	Rail Supervisor
RAIL	Rail Supervisor
	MTPD RAIL

EXTERNAL ON-SCENE PERSONNEL				
Name	TO ME	Agency/Department	Title/Role	
	-			

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Use separate sheet if additional space is rec	quired.		
REQUESTS			
*Radio Run Requested (Yes/No):	NO		
*Digital Video Evidence Unit (DVEU) Video Requested (Yes/No):	NO		
If "Yes," location where video is stored:			

OBS	ERVATIONS
2016 hours - Complaint called Fairfax PD state	ing a national bomb threat at Crystal City metro. Info was
passed onto Arlington PD, then to MTPD.	
2016 hours - Bomb threat questions "where is	it" "what time will it go off" was asked by
communications.	
2018 hours - responding from Addison F	Road Metro.
2020 hours - advise to evacuate the sta	tion and have trains bypass.
2020 hours - (Watch Commander) advi	se to close the station.
2021 hours - Train 301 on approach to Crysta	al City Metro on Track 1.
2022 hours - Operations manager ROCC	was notified of the bypassing and closing of the
station.	
2022 hours - Initial page sent.	
2023 hours – begins clearing the station.	
2023 hours - IMO advise instructions are being	ng given to bypass Crystal City Metro.
2024 hours - Station Manager has closed the	gate to the station.
2026 hours - IMO request location for comma	nd post when established.
2027 hours – establishe command p	ost on exterior of station.
2027 hours - All units have cleared the station	n of patrons and wmata employees before going topside.
2029 hours - establishes On Scene Co	mmand topside in the bus bay.
2029 hours - All patrons are evacuated to inc	ude the station manager.
2029 hours - Incident is moved to MTPD 2X.	
2036 hours - Arlington county passes their in	o to communications.
2039 hours - Foot Officer will transport th	e rail supervisor.

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2045 hours – Video places a lookout for a male Possibly Hispanic or Middle Eastern male, facial hair blak coat.

2047 hours – Complaint advise there was no threats and someone stole items from her.

2050 hours – One person is stopped topside matching the look out broadcast from communication.

2053 hours – Officer picked up the rail supervisors from Pentagon City Metro to bring them to Crystal City Metro.

2057 hours – Rail Supervisors arrive at Crystal City Metro. Rail Supervisor

2105 hours – Complaint is identified as

2109 hours – In has completed the sweep of the station with negative results.

2109 hours – Units will conduct a final visual sweep before turning station back over to rail.

2119 hours – On Scene Commander advised that its ok to reopen that station with all sweeps completed and negative findings.

Use separate sheet if additional space is required.

#### NOTES

2124 hours - ON Scene Commander has turned the station back over to rail. All MTPD units are clear.

Once ICS is established, the On-Scene Command (OSC), the OSC should provide a location of command and ensure communication is provided to CCU for units responding to easily find the command post.

In reference to a bomb threat the location for the OSC should be a distance away and not in the vicinity where the posible threat may be.

The MTPD units responded quickly and evacuated the station while checking back rooms for employees. The scene was secured until K-9 arrived and did a sweep to clear.

Communication between IMO and OSC was clear.

An Entry-Exit Log was established,

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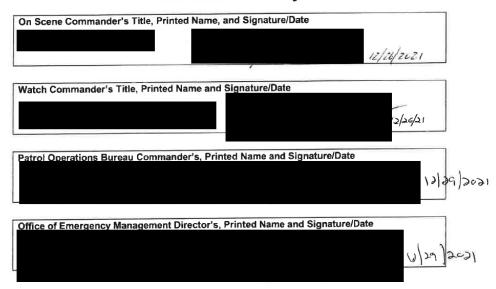
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Drafted By: SAFE EM-51 – 01/24/2022 Reviewed By: SAFE 703 – 03/29/2022 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 04/01/2022 age 14



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#### Appendix B - ROCC Incident Report

#### View Approved Incident Report

#### **INCIDENT ID: 2021359YELLOW2** DATE TIME LINE **ITEM** 2021-12-25 2022 Yellow LOCATION/CHAIN MARKER (If REPORTED BY LOCATION (STATION/YARD) Crystal City (C09) Applicable) **ROCC Management** DIRECTION **TRAIN ID** TRACK NUMBER **DEPTS NOTIFIED** Everbridge Alert/Messaging O/B **CAR NUMBERS (XXXX-XXXX) Lead Car** Caused Issue □ Caused Issue □ Caused Issue □ Caused Issue □ TRBL CODE **RESP CODE** THRT-THREAT POL TO REV SERVICE (BOMB)

#### TYPE INCIDENT

Report Of Bomb Threat In Station

#### **ACTION PLAN**

Bypass Station, Close Station, Dispatch MTPD, Dispatch RTRA Supervisors, SOP 1A Implemented

		DELAYS IN I	MINUTES		
LINE		INCIDENT	TRAIN	1	TOTAL DURATION
0		20	20		0
		TRIPS MO	DIFIED		
PARTIAL	GAP TRAIN	LATE DISPATCHES	REROUTED	NOT DISPATCH	OFFLOADS ED
0	0	0	0	0	0
W. S. D. S.		FIVE PRIMARY CONS	OLE INDICAT	TIONS	
ВСР	BRAKES OF			UTO\MANUAL LLUMINATED	L BPP
				AUTO	

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#### View Approved Incident Report

		VIC	w Approved Tricide	пс керогс
MI EN	AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON		INCIDENT CHRONOLOGY	
TIME	DESCRIPTION			
2022	ROCC Management received a report of a possible bomb threat at Crystal City Station. RTRA Supervisors and and were dispatched to the scene. IMO report to AOM to by-pass the station. Local bus service utilized. ROIC, MTPD, MOC, and all concerned personnel were notified.			
2026	Train ID 303 was the first train to bypass Crystal City station track 2 in the direction of Huntington.			
2029	MTPD reported Crystal City station evacuated and clear of all customers.			
2033	Train ID 401 was the first train to bypass Crystal City station track 1 in the direction of Largo.			
2036	assigned the On-Scene Commander and assigned RTRA Fwd. Liaison. SOP 1A implemented.			
2039	Incident Command Post was established at Crystal City bus bay.			
2052	and were transported to Crystal City Incident Command post by transport unit			
2057	and arrived on the scene at the command post.			
2102	SGT assigned the On-Scene Commander and assigned RTRA Fwd. Liaison, assigned RTRA incident liasion.			
2124	reported Crystal City station was safe and open for revenue service.			
2127	Train 306 was the first train to service Crystal City station track 2. Normal service resumed.			
MAXIMO 1 8578330	TICKET#			
REPORT P	REPARED BY	NAME		CLICK TO SIGN
RADIO CONTROLLER 1				*
BUTTON C	ONTROLLER 1			✓
RADIO CO	NTROLLER 2			
BUTTON C	ONTROLLER 2			
23/36	0-780	SUPERINTE	NDENTS OR ASSISTANTS	SECTION
	AL FOLLOW-U	P CORRECTIV	E	
	JP INFORMATI DEPARTMENTS		FROM	
NOTIFICA	TIONS/PAGE (	GROUPS	#1/CEO 🗖 #2/DGN	/I &BELOW ■
ADDITION PHONE	IAL NOTIFICAT	TIONS MADE E	Y IMO	
APPROVE	D BY		NAME	CLICK TO SIGN
REPORT A SUPT.	PPROVED BY S	SUPT. OR ASST		<b>V</b>

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