



WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0183 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons – Franconia-Springfield Station – May 17, 2022

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on September 20, 2022

Safety event summary:

A rider threatened to blow up the Blue Line train they were riding on near Crystal City Station. Another rider reported this threat to the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD). Metrorail allowed the train identified by an MTPD dispatcher as being the relevant train to continue in service to Franconia-Springfield Station, even though MTPD dispatchers identified the train when it was approaching Braddock Road Station at 2:44 p.m. MTPD personnel in the field stated they would respond to Franconia-Springfield Station (the end of the Blue Line).

MTPD later checked the train for possible explosives or suspicious devices at Franconia-Springfield Station. None were found.

The MTPD Watch Commander then directed at 3:03 p.m. that the station and train be evacuated based on MTPD safety protocols. MTPD management later stated that they did not follow this instruction, as they said they had already checked the station for explosives before that request to comply with Metrorail policy was conveyed. Radio recordings demonstrate that a Rail Supervisor at Franconia-Springfield Station informed the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) at 3:08 p.m. that MTPD personnel at the station had cleared the station and it was safe for train movement, but that MTPD also planned to check the following train when it arrived at the station.

The person accused of making the threat on the train was identified.

Metrorail did not implement an incident command structure as required by its policies, including SOP #1A.

Probable Cause:

The probable cause of this event was a rider making a threat.

WMSC staff observations:

Evacuations for life safety reasons, including due to bomb threats, are classified as accidents by the Federal Transit Administration that must be reported to both the FTA and WMSC, and that require investigations.

The incident command structure is required to respond to incidents, it is not discretionary. Proper emergency response is critical to safety. The incident command structure is scalable and Metrorail procedures and the National Incident Management System require that it be applied at the appropriate scale to each event. The WMSC issued related findings as part of the Emergency Management and Fire and Life Safety Programs Audit issued in February 2022. Metrorail is in the process of implementing corrective action plans to address those findings.

An evacuation occurred only of the train in this event, not the station as initially reported.



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

FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I E22304

Date of Event:	05/17/2022
Type of Event:	Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons
Incident Time:	14:44 hours
Location:	Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1
Time and How received by SAFE:	14:58 hours via MAC Notification
WMSC Notification Time:	15:46 hours
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA: No WMSC: No Other: No
Rail Vehicle:	Train ID 408 L3062-3063.3003-3002.3166-3167T
Injuries:	None
Damage:	None
Emergency Responders:	Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20220718#101590

Franconia-Springfield Station – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

May 17, 2022

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ARS	Audio Recording System
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
I/A	Incidents/Accidents
MSRPH	Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook
MTPD	Metro Transit Police Department
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
ROCC	Rail Operations Control Center
ROCS	Rail Operations Control System
SAFE	Department of Safety and Environmental Management
SMS	Safety Measurement System
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Executive Summary

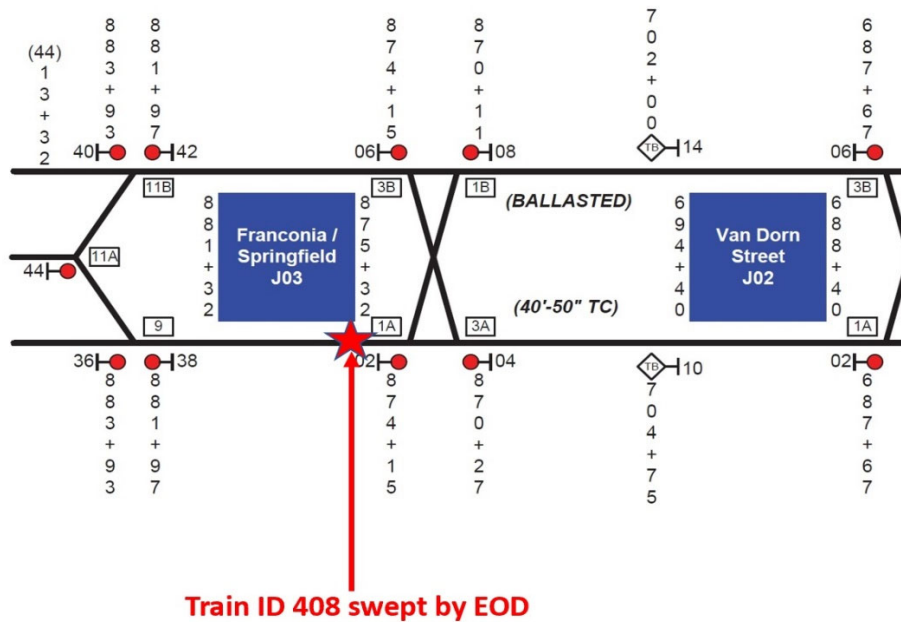
On Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at approximately 14:44 hours, Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) personnel responded to Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1 for a customer complaint concerning a customer onboard outbound Blue Line Train ID 408 [L3062-3063.3003-3002.3166-3167T] making verbal threats. MTPD reported that the complainant stated they received a verbal threat from another customer at Washington National Airport Station stating they would blow up the train. MTPD Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Units responded and held Train ID 408 at Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1. While berthed at Franconia-Springfield Station, MTPD EOD Units cleared and swept Train ID 408 and the station with negative results any explosive or suspicious devices. According to the Audio Recording System (ARS), at approximately 15:03 hours, MTPD personnel received instructions to evacuate Franconia-Springfield Station and Train ID 408 until the train and station were swept for any explosive devices. It was subsequently reported by MTPD that the station evacuation did not occur as EOD units had already swept the station before the request was made by the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC), making further evacuations unnecessary. No threats were found as a result of the sweeps of the train and station. The person involved in making the threat was identified and arrested. No injuries or damages occurred as a result of the incident.

The probable cause of the call for evacuation for life safety reasons at Franconia-Springfield Station was criminal activity by a customer verbally making a bomb threat while onboard Train ID 408. MTPD determined this event to be criminal in nature and the customer was arrested due to the verbal threats. The investigation did not identify significant deficiencies with communication or adherence to established response procedures under direction of responding law enforcement personnel.

Incident Site

Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1

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.

Investigative Methods

The investigative methodologies included the following:

- Documentation Review – A collection of relevant work history information and process documentation contained in Metro systems of record. These records include:
 - Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRPH)
 - National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
 - Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Event Report
 - Rail Operations Control System (ROCS) SPOTS Report
- System Data Recording Review – A collection of information contained in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
 - ARS (Audio Recording System) playback [Radio and Landline Communications]

Investigation

The investigation revealed that at approximately 14:44 hours, MTPD personnel responded to Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1 for a customer complaint concerning a customer onboard outbound Blue Line Train ID 408 [L3062-3063.3003-3002.3166-3167T] making verbal threats. The complainant reportedly stated they received a verbal bomb threat from another customer while onboard Train ID 408 at Washington National Airport Station. MTPD personnel were notified via radio that Train ID 408 was in approach to Braddock Station at approximately 14:44 hours. EOD Units responded and held Train ID 408 at Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1. While berthed at Franconia-Springfield Station, MTPD EOD Units swept Train ID 408 and the station with negative results of any explosive devices or suspicious packages. At approximately 15:03 hours, MTPD personnel received instructions from the Watch Commander to evacuate Franconia-Springfield Station and Train ID 408 until the train and station was swept for any explosive devices. MTPD management subsequently reported the station was not evacuated due to EOD units sweeping and clearing the station before the request was made, making the evacuation unnecessary.

Chronological Event Timeline

A review of ARS playback, i.e., phone and radio communications and ROCS SPOTS Report revealed the following:

Time	Description
14:44 hours	MTPD receives a call for service via MTPD dispatch of Train ID 408, Car #3003 containing a customer making racial slurs and threatening to blow up the train. Train ID 408 approaching Braddock Road Station on Track 1. MTPD personnel responds they are en route to Franconia-Springfield Station. [MTPD 1x]
14:46 hours	MTPD personnel asks MTPD dispatch for the person who reported the incident. MTPD dispatch stated the compliant originated from a customer who got off the train at Crystal City Station. MTPD personnel dispatched to locate the witness. [MTPD 1x]
15:05 hours	ROCC instructs Train ID 401 to hold at Van Dorn Street Station, Track 2 as MTPD personnel are investigating at Franconia-Springfield Station. [OPS 3]
15:08 hours	[RTRA Supervisor] reports to ROCC that Franconia-Springfield Station has been cleared by MTPD and the station is safe for train movement. ROCC asks if MTPD will inspect the next train. [RTRA Supervisor] affirms MTPD will check Train ID 401 when it arrives at Franconia-Springfield Station. [OPS 3]
15:14 hours	Train ID 408 departs Franconia-Springfield Station, Track 1 after being held for approximately 20 minutes. [SPOTS Report]

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

Weather

At the time of the incident, NOAA recorded the temperature at 61° F, rain, mostly cloudy, 78% humidity, wind 8 mph with visibility of 3 miles. Weather was not a contributing factor in this incident (Weather source: NOAA – Location: Arlington, VA.)

Incident Date: 05/17/2022 Time: 14:44 hours
Final Report Rev. 1– Evacuation for Life Safety
Reasons
E22304

Rev. 1 Drafted By: SAFE 702 – 08/19/2022
Rev. 1 Reviewed By: SAFE 71 – 08/25/2022
Rev. 1 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 08/25/2022

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Findings

- Based on the MSRPH 14.5.1.5, MTPD determines if facilities are to be evacuated or closed. The station was not evacuated as MTPD EOD units had already swept Train ID 408 and Franconia-Springfield Station before the evacuation request was made. In addition, the person who made the threats was identified and detained.
- SOP #1A was not implemented at the discretion of MTPD.

Immediate Mitigation

- ROCC directed revenue trains to hold at Franconia-Springfield and Van Dorn Street Stations.
- MTPD EOD personnel conducted a sweep of Franconia-Springfield Station.
- Person of concern was removed from Train ID 408.

Probable Cause Statement

The probable cause of the evacuation for life safety reasons at Franconia-Springfield Station was criminal activity by a customer verbally making a bomb threat while onboard Train ID 408. MTPD determined this event to be criminal in nature and the customer was arrested due to the verbal threats. The investigation did not identify significant deficiencies with communication or adherence to established response procedures under direction of responding law enforcement personnel.

SAFE Recommendations/Corrective Actions

SAFE has no recommendations or corrective actions related to this incident.

Appendices

Appendix A – Selected Page from Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Event Report

Has a DVR been requested? <i>Narrative Information</i>	
On 5/17/22 at NAPT a report of a bomb threat occurred. A1 was stopped and arrested in relation to the threat at NAPT. TSOC was Notified TSA-05-15838-22	
If second CCN is available, insert here:	Additional Narrative on Supplemental Report

MTPD CCN:
ORI-DCMTP0000

Event Report Page 4 of 5

Document 4 – MTPD Event Report Page 4 of 5.

Incident Date: 05/17/2022 Time: 14:44 hours
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Rev. 1 Drafted By: SAFE 702 – 08/19/2022
Rev. 1 Reviewed By: SAFE 71 – 08/25/2022
Rev. 1 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 08/25/2022

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Appendix B – Rail Operations Control System (ROCS) SPOTS Report

Select Platform: and/or Select ID: Leave blank to remove criteria
 and/or Select 4-digit car number: Leave blank to remove criteria
 Select Date: Select Times (0-24HRS): From To

Generate Report

ID	Platform	length	dcode	Right door open	Right door close	dwell	Left door open	Left door close	dwell	Head Arrived	Tail cleared	cars	Headway door open to door open
408	G01-2	6	16				14:01:16	14:01:41	25	14:00:47	14:02:05	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	-
408	D08-2	6	16				14:06:14	14:06:36	22	14:05:45	14:07:00	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	4:58
408	D07-2	6	16				14:08:18	14:08:40	22	14:07:46	14:09:04	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:04
408	D06-2	6	16				14:10:12	14:10:36	24	14:09:41	14:11:00	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:54
408	D05-2	6	16				14:12:01	14:12:31	30	14:11:29	14:12:54	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:49
408	D04-2	6	16				14:14:05	14:14:29	24	14:13:28	14:14:54	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:04
408	D03-2	6	16				14:15:39	14:16:02	23	14:15:04	14:16:27	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:34
408	D02-2	6	16	14:17:20	14:17:44	24				14:16:55	14:18:14	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:41
408	D01-2	6	16				14:19:07	14:19:30	23	14:18:32	14:19:55	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:47
408	C01-2	6	16				14:20:35	14:21:04	29	14:20:04	14:21:28	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:28
408	C02-2	6	16	14:22:28	14:22:55	27				14:21:59	14:23:20	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:53
408	C03-2	6	16	14:24:06	14:24:32	26				14:23:38	14:24:55	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:38
408	C04-2	6	16				14:25:58	14:26:21	23	14:25:26	14:26:46	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:52
408	C05-2	6	16				14:28:45	14:29:11	26	14:28:13	14:29:35	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:47
408	C06-2	6	16	14:31:07	14:31:37	30				14:30:37	14:32:04	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:22
408	C07-2	6	16				14:34:03	14:34:27	24	14:33:31	14:34:53	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:56
408	C08-2	6	16	14:35:51	14:36:18	27				14:35:24	14:36:42	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	1:48
408	C09-2	6	16	14:37:56	14:38:20	24				14:37:25	14:38:41	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:05
408	C10-2	6	16				14:39:56	14:40:52	56	14:39:20	14:41:26	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	2:00
408	C11-2	6	16							14:43:39	14:43:53	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	-
408	C12-2	6	16				14:45:36	14:46:01	25	14:45:05	14:46:28	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	5:40
408	C13-2	6	16							14:47:01	14:48:25	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	-
408	J02-2	6	16				14:53:18	14:53:45	27	14:52:47	14:54:09	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	7:42
408	J03-1	6	72				15:13:25	15:14:05	40	14:58:16	15:14:42	3082-3083.3003-3002.3166-3167	20:07
408	J02-1	6	72				15:19:44	15:20:14	30	15:19:07	15:20:42	3167-3166.3002-3003.3083-3082	6:19

Illustration 1 – SPOTS Report illustrating Train ID 408 being held by MTPD at Franconia-Springfield Station for approximately 20 minutes.