



WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0215 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons – Benning Road Station – December 8, 2022

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on April 11, 2023

Safety event summary:

On Thursday, December 8, 2022, Benning Road Station was evacuated due to the report of gunshots fired on the station's platform.

An Office of Rail Transportation Supervisor broadcasted an emergency message via radio to the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) and reported hearing gunshots on the station's platform. A ROCC Radio Rail Traffic Controller designated the Supervisor as On-Scene Commander. Two additional Rail Supervisors arrived and, along with the Station Manager, assisted an injured customer and evacuated the station.

When Metro Transit Police Department personnel arrived, they assumed Incident Command and established the command post. The Rail Supervisor's designation was properly changed from On-Scene Commander to RTRA Forward Liaison.

The Radio Rail Traffic Controller instructed train operators on Radio Ops 2 (Blue, Orange and Silver Line) to bypass Benning Road Station via radio approximately 10 minutes after the incident was first reported.

After the station had been evacuated, the Rail Supervisor, acting as the Rail Forward Liaison, requested that third rail power be de-energized on Track 2 for evidence recovery. The Mission Assurance Coordinator advised MTPD that power had been de-energized. The Radio Rail Traffic Controller contacted the Rail Supervisor and granted Foul Time to enter the roadway. The Rail Supervisor correctly confirmed third rail power was de-energized, evidence was recovered, and all personnel cleared the roadway. The Rail Supervisor relinquished Foul Time.

Third rail power was re-energized at 1:53 p.m., and trains began bypassing the station again.

Normal train service resumed at 3:53 p.m.

Probable Cause:

The probable cause of this evacuation for life safety reasons was a shooting in the station.

Corrective Actions:

Example of related open corrective action plans (CAPs)

- C-0163 was created to address a 2022 emergency management and fire and life safety audit finding that Metrorail created and implemented the Mission Assurance Coordinator position without documented training, responsibilities, communication or coordination, and without adequate staffing to ensure other emergency management and preparedness activities were not interrupted. Metrorail must define the roles, responsibilities, authorities, and tasks of each position in the emergency management and fire and life safety process. This CAP is due for completion in August 2023.



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Department of Safety (SAFE)
Office of Safety Investigations (OSI)
FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION E22797

Date of Event:	December 8, 2022
Type of Event:	Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons
Incident Time:	09:01 hours
Location:	Benning Road Station (Platform)
Time and How received by SAFE:	09:02 hours Mission Assurance Coordinator (MAC)
WMSC Notification Time:	09:10 hours
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA: None WMSC: None Other: RTRA, PLNT
Rail Vehicle:	N/A
Injuries:	Three injuries
Damage:	None
Emergency Responders:	Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD), District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DCFEMS)
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20221208#104741

Benning Road – Train Station

December 8, 2023

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
DCFEMS	District of Columbia Fire Department
MAC	Mission Assurance Coordinator
MTPD	Metro Transit Police Department
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
RTC	Radio Traffic Controller
RTRA	Office of Rail Transportation
ROCC	Rail Operations Control Center
ROIC	Rail Operation Information Center
SAFE	Department of Safety
SMS	Safety Measurement System
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
WMSC	Washington Metrorail Safety Commission

**Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Department of Safety – Office of Safety Investigations**

Executive Summary

**Note that all times listed are approximate and may contain minor variations due to differences between systems of record. **

On Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 09:01 hours, an Office of Rail Transportation (RTRA) Rail Supervisor #1 broadcast an emergency message that gunshots were being fired on the platform at Benning Road Station to the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC). At 09:02 hours, the Radio Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) designated Supervisor #1 as the On-Scene Commander. At 09:06 hours, Supervisor #1 advised that the Station Manager and RTRA Supervisors #2 and #3 were on the scene at Benning Road Station. They assisted with the station evacuation and rendered aid to injured customers.

At 09:07 hours, Supervisor #1 advised ROCC that the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) was on the scene, and they were designated as the Incident Commander. The Radio RTC designated Supervisor #1 as the RTRA Forward Liaison.

At 09:11 hours, the Radio RTC began announcing to the Blue, Orange, and Silver Line Radio Channel (OPS 2) that Train Operators would bypass Benning Road Station due to a police emergency. The Station Manager evacuated all customers from Benning Road Station at 09:12 hours. At 09:13 hours, MTPD assumed command of the incident and designated the command post as Benning Road Command.

At 12:20 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 requested to de-energize third rail power on track 2 for evidence recovery. At 12:33 hours, the Mission Assurance Coordinator (MAC) advised that third rail power was de-energized on track #2. The Radio RTC contacted RTRA Supervisor #1 to grant Foul Time for evidence recovery.

At 13:45 hours, Benning Road Command reported that all personnel and equipment had cleared the roadway and were in a place of safety. At 13:46 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 relinquished Foul Time and advised that all personnel and equipment had cleared the roadway and were in a place of safety. At 13:53 hours, the Radio RTC confirmed that power had been restored to track 2 and that all trains would continue to bypass Benning Road Station.

At 14:07 hours, the Benning Road Command notified RTRA Supervisor #1 that the scene command was turned over to RTRA. RTRA Supervisor #1 acknowledged and advised that Plant Maintenance (PLNT) personnel were on the scene and clean-up was underway. RTRA Supervisor #1 stated they would advise ROCC when normal revenue service could resume.

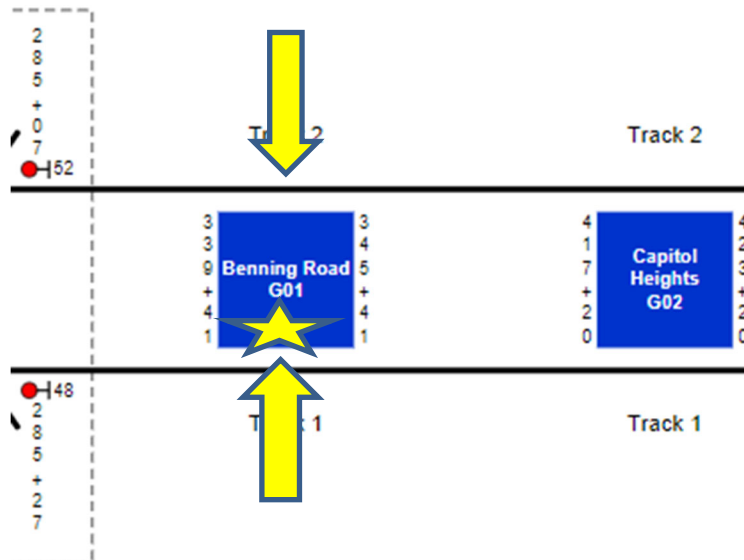
At 15:53 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 notified ROCC that Benning Road Station was clear for normal revenue service.

The probable cause for the evacuation for life safety reasons was criminal activity that posed an immediate danger to customers and personnel in the area.

Incident Site

Benning Road Station, Platform

Field Sketch/Schematics



**Locations are approximate. Not to scale.*

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this accident 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

Upon receiving notification of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event on December 8, 2022, SAFE dispatched a cross-functional team to assess the scene and conduct the subsequent investigation. SAFE team members worked with relevant WMATA subject matter experts to review the incident's facts and data.

Investigation Methods

The investigative methodologies included the following:

- Site assessment through video and document review.
- Informal Interviews – Collected through conversations with individuals during the investigation to provide background and supporting information. Written statements were reviewed from personnel present during the event.
- 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 and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

- ROIC SOP
- System Data Recording Review – A collection of information contained in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
 - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback
 - Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)

Investigation

On Thursday, December 8, 2022, at 09:01 hours, Rail Supervisor #1 broadcast an emergency message that gunshots were being fired on the platform at Benning Road Station. At 09:02 hours, the Radio RTC designated RTRA Supervisor #1 as the On-Scene Commander. At 09:06 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 advised ROCC that the Station Manager and RTRA Supervisors #2 and #3 were on the scene at Benning Road Station; they were assisting with the station evacuation and rendering aid to the injured customers.

At 09:07 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 advised ROCC that MTPD was on the scene and self-designated as the Incident Commander. The Radio RTC designated RTRA Supervisor #1 as the RTRA Forward Liaison.

At 09:11 hours, the Radio RTC controller began announcing to the Train Operators on Ops 2 to bypass Benning Road Station due to a police emergency. At 09:12 hours, the Station Manager reported that Benning Road Station had evacuated all customers to the ROIC on the Ops 5 channel, which is monitored by a Rail Operations Information Center (ROIC) Controller. At 09:13 hours, an MTPD Officer broadcast a radio message assuming command of the incident and designated the command post as Benning Road Command.

At 12:20 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 made a request through the Radio RTC that power be de-energized on track 2 for evidence recovery. At 12:33 hours, the MAC advised that third rail power had been de-energized on track 2, and the Radio RTC contacted Supervisor #1 to grant Foul Time for evidence recovery. Supervisor #1 confirmed that power was down and a Warning Strobe and Alarm Device (WSAD) was in place.

At 13:45 hours, Benning Road Command reported that all personnel and equipment had cleared the roadway and were in a place of safety. At 13:46 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 relinquished Foul Time and advised that all personnel and equipment had cleared the roadway and were in a place of safety. At 13:53 hours, the Radio RTC confirmed that power had been restored to track 2 and that all trains would continue to bypass Benning Road Station.

The restoration of power procedures prescribed were followed by the RTC Radio/Button and the Power Desk Controllers at the time of restoration.

At 14:07 hours, the Benning Road Command notified RTRA Supervisor #1 that the scene command had been turned over to RTRA. RTRA Supervisor #1 acknowledged and advised that the PLNT was on the scene and clean-up was underway. RTRA Supervisor #1 stated they would advise ROCC when normal revenue service could resume.

At 15:53 hours, RTRA Supervisor #1 notified ROCC that Benning Road Station was clear for normal revenue service.

Chronological ARS Timeline

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

Time	Description
09:01:15 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Transmitted an emergency message, stating that shots were fired at Benning Road Train Station. [Radio OPS2]
09:02:19 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Designated RTRA Supervisor #1 as on-scene commander [Radio OPS2]
09:06:00 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Advised that the Station Manager, RTRA Supervisor #2, and RTRA Supervisor #3 are on scene at Benning Road. [Radio OPS2]
09:07:02 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Advised central that MTPD is on the scene. <u>Radio RTC</u> : Designated RTRA Supervisor #1 Incident Scene Forward Liaison. [Radio OPS 2]
09:11:23 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Made announcements to bypass Benning Road Station due to a police investigation.[Radio OPS2]
09:12:35 hours	<u>Station Manager</u> : Reported that Benning Road Station was evacuated of all customers. [Radio Ops 5]
09:13:14 hours	<u>MTPD Unit #1</u> : Assumed command of the incident. <u>Radio RTC</u> : Designated RTRA Supervisor #1 as Forward Liaison. [Radio OPS2]
09:13:47 hours	<u>MTPD Benning Road Command</u> : Advised station was closed and secured. The Incident Command Post is located by the kiosk. [Radio OPS2]
09:17:00 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Made announcement to bypass Benning Road due to a police investigation. [Radio OPS2]
12:20:43 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Notified ROCC and requested power to be de-energized on Track #2 for evidence recovery. [Radio OPS 2]
12:33:47 hours	<u>MAC</u> : Advised Benning Road Command that third rail power is down on Track #2. <u>Radio RTC</u> : Contacted Supervisor #1 and granted Foul Time to enter the roadway. <u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> Acknowledged and repeated, confirmed power was down and WSAD is in place. [Radio OPS 2]
13:45:22 hours	<u>MTPD Benning Rd Command</u> : Advised that all personnel and equipment were clear of the roadway, and all power can be restored to Track #2. [Radio OPS2]
13:46:29 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Relinquished Foul Time with ROCC and advised all personnel and equipment have cleared the roadway and are at a place of safety. [Radio OPS2]
13:53:05 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Confirmed that power has been restored to Track#2, and all trains will continue to bypass Benning Road. [Radio OPS2]
14:07:41 hours	<u>MTPD Benning Road Command</u> : Notified RTRA that scene command had been turned over. <u>RTRA Supervisor#1</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. Advised that PLNT is on-site preparing the station for reopening. [Radio OPS2]
15:53:19 hours	<u>RTRA Supervisor #1</u> : Advised that Benning Road is cleared for normal revenue service. [Radio OPS2]

****Note:** Times above may vary from other systems' timelines based on clock settings and reporting sources.

Human Factors

Fatigue

Signs and Symptoms of Fatigue

The biomathematical fatigue modeling application (SAFTE-FAST Web SFC) was not applied for this event.

Fatigue Risk

The biomathematical fatigue modeling application (SAFTE-FAST Web SFC) was not applied for this event.

Post-Incident Testing

Post-incident testing was not conducted for this event.

Weather

On December 8, 2022, at the time of the incident, NOAA recorded the temperature as 48 F, with partly cloudy skies throughout the afternoon. This event occurred within a tunneled section of the rail system. Weather was not a contributing factor in this incident (Weather source: NOAA – Location: Washington, DC).

Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence

- Station was evacuated.
- Benning Road Station was closed for investigation.

Probable Cause Statement

The probable cause for the evacuation for life safety reasons was a criminal activity that posed an immediate danger to customers and personnel in the area.

Recommended Corrective Actions

There were no Recommended Corrective Actions related to this event.