



WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0220 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons – Alexandria Rail Yard – November 17, 2022

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on May 16, 2023

Safety event summary:

Metrorail evacuated the Revenue Collection Building in the Alexandria Rail Yard on November 17, 2022 due to a bomb threat.

The recipient of the bomb threat spoke on the phone with an individual from the Metro Transit Police Department. This threat and the decision to evacuate were not communicated to others such as the Security Operations Control Center that serves as the Metro Transit Police Department dispatch and coordination center.

Metrorail's emergency reporting and command and control procedures were not followed during this event. This includes a failure to establish incident command for an extended period of time, and unclear communication among Metro Transit Police Department officers in the field and their dispatchers.

During this event, Metrorail did not inform the Special Police Officer stationed at the Alexandria Rail Yard entrance of the emergency, of Metro Transit Police Department response and staging, or of the conclusion of the emergency. The Interlocking Operator who is responsible for activities in the yard such as train movement was also not notified. The event was also not called in to the Metro Transit Police Department dispatch in the Security Operations Control Center.

Metrorail's Revenue Collection Facility emergency action plan was not followed in this event. Specifically, the Maintenance Operations Center (MOC) was not contacted as required. In addition, the plan did not include specific steps necessary for bomb threats or evacuations.

No one was injured during this event, and no evidence of any explosive device was found.

Probable Cause:

The probable cause of this event was a bomb threat. The probable cause of the numerous deficiencies in Metrorail's response is Metrorail's insufficient interdepartmental coordination and emergency preparedness, which contribute to Metrorail's lack of command, control and coordination of emergency response as required by Metrorail procedures and the National Incident Management System. Further contributing to the deficiencies in response are Metro Transit Police Department personnel's unfamiliarity with Metrorail operations and inadequate communication.

Corrective Actions:

Metrorail is developing a lessons learned document for Office of the Treasurer personnel on the importance of using established communication procedures for emergencies, including providing contact numbers and department titles.

Metrorail will review SOP #1A (command and control of emergencies) with Metro Transit Police Department personnel and Office of the Treasurer personnel and ensure they know the contents of the procedure.

Metrorail will conduct evacuation drills and establish evacuation captains for Office of the Treasurer personnel.

Metrorail will conduct an After-Action Review and develop an Office of the Treasurer SOP for bomb threats including evidence handling, communication procedures, and evacuation procedures.



Metro Transit Police Department Personnel will speak with all officers regarding effective radio communication with the Security Operations Control Center (SOCC).

The Metro Transit Police Department will ensure that events are communicated with all personnel at a location, including emphasizing the most critical elements.

Examples of other related open corrective action plans (CAPs):

- C-0162 addresses the finding that Metrorail does not consistently follow the incident command system (ICS) structure and has procedures that do not comply with National Incident Management System (NIMS)/ICS requirements such as the use of plain language. WMATA committed to developing and implementing the Incident Management Framework that aligns with the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System (NIMS/ICS) (Expected date of completion January 2025)
- C-0165 addresses the finding that MTPD general orders do not reflect current operational realities and procedures, and areas for improvement from prior events are not effectively communicated to frontline MTPD personnel. WMATA committed to review and update general orders related to incident command, major incident scene, operations aboard trains and on the roadway and person struck by train. (Expected date of completion December 2023)
- C-0176 addresses the recommendation that Metrorail has opportunities to improve and expand training and training coordination related to fire and life safety and emergency management. Under this CAP, WMATA committed to conduct a training assessment of the Incident Management Framework and will develop training based on that assessment. (Expected date of completion March 2024)
- C-0177 addresses the recommendation that MTPD does not have a useable incident checklist for emergencies. WMATA committed to develop a checklist and training on the checklist for MTPD officers to use during emergency response and a documented process to distribute those checklists to officers. (Expected date of completion September 2023)



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Department of Safety (SAFE)
Office of Safety Investigations (OSI)
FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I E22750

Date of Event:	November 17, 2022
Type of Event:	Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons (Bomb Threat)
Incident Time:	10:50 Hours
Location:	Alexandria Rail Yard (C94 – Revenue Collection Building)
Time and How received by SAFE:	10:50 Hours – SAFE/MAC
WMSC Notification Time:	11:16 Hours
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA: OEP WMSC: None Other: None
Rail Vehicle:	N/A
Injuries:	None
Damage:	None
Emergency Responders	Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20221201#104575

Alexandria Rail Yard Revenue Collection Facility - Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

November 17, 2022

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
EOD	Explosive and Ordnance Detection
MOC	Maintenance Operation Control
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
MSRPH	Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook
MTPD	Metropolitan Transit Police Department
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OEP	Office of Emergency Preparedness
SAFE	Department of Safety
SOCC	Security Operations Control Center
SPO	Special Police Officer
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, November 17, 2022, at 10:50 hours, an Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event occurred at the Alexandria Rail Yard – Revenue Collection Building. An Office of the Treasurer Director of Revenue Operations received a letter through the United States Postal Service, which indicated a bomb threat to the building. The building was evacuated, and the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD), the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), and OEP (Office of Emergency Preparedness) were notified.

The Director of the Revenue Collection facility initiated an evacuation of the building as a safety measure.

Specialized MTPD units were dispatched to Alexandria Rail Yard to inspect for any possible explosive device. Once on scene, the On-Scene Commander contacted the Security Operations Control Center (SOCC) and advised a "sweep" of the building was being conducted.

After a search of the building, MTPD declared the area safe. The SOCC was notified that the building was clear of explosive devices.

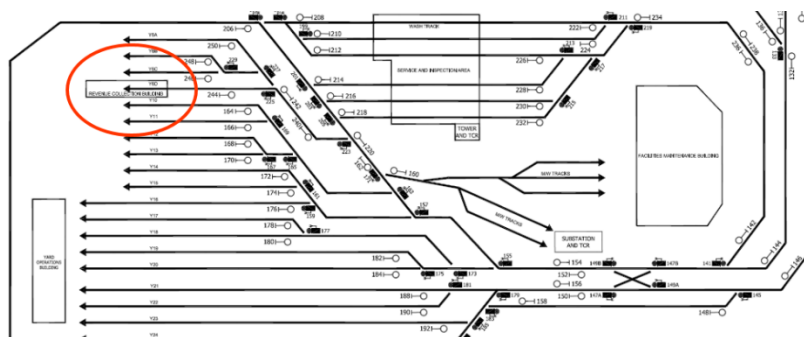
No personnel were harmed or injured during this event. There was no impact to train service at the Alexandria Rail Yard or Metro Rail System.

The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event of the Revenue Collection Facility at the Alexandria Rail Yard on November 17, 2022, was a letter from an unknown person threatening the location.

Incident Site

Alexandria Rail Yard – Revenue Collection Facility

Field Sketch/Schematics



**Locations are approximate. Not to scale.*

Purpose and Scope

This incident investigation and candid self-evaluation aim 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 Reasons event on November 17, 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.

The investigative methodologies included the following:

- Formal Interviews – SAFE interviewed two individuals as part of this investigation. The interview included persons present at, during, and after the incident, those directly involved in the response process, and representatives from the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC). SAFE interviewed the following individuals:
 - Director, Revenue Operations
 - Manager, Technical Operations
- 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.
 - Special Police Officer
- Documentation Review – A collection of relevant 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)
 - Facility-Specific Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
 - Metro Transit Police Incident Report
 - Office of the Treasurer Incident Report
- System Data Recording Review – A collection of information contained in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
 - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback includes OPS 3 Radio and Landline Communications
 - Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)

Investigation

On Thursday, November 17, 2022, at 10:50 hours, an Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event occurred at the Alexandria Rail Yard – Revenue Collection Building. An Office of the Treasurer Representative, Director, Revenue Operations, received a letter through the United States Postal Service indicating a bomb threat to the building. The building was evacuated, and MTPD, the FBI, and OEP were notified. The Director of the revenue collection facility initiated an evacuation of the building.

Specialized MTPD units, including K-9 and Explosives and Ordinance Detection (EOD) were dispatched to Alexandria Rail Yard to inspect for any possible explosive device. Once on scene,

the On-Scene Commander contacted the SOCC and advised a "sweep" of the building was being conducted.

After a search of the building, MTPD declared the area safe. The SOCC was notified that the building was clear of any explosive device. MTPD led the overall coordination of investigating the Bomb Threat event. The investigation of all the related WMATA assets involved in this event yielded no sign of explosive devices. No personnel were harmed or injured during this event. There were no delays to revenue train service at the Alexandria Rail Yard or Metro Rail System.

Through investigation, it was revealed that the Special Police Officer on duty and located at the Alexandria Rail Yard entrance was not notified of the bomb threat command scene staging with MTPD. Additionally, the Special Police Officer did not participate in the briefing on what was transpiring inside of the Revenue Collection Facility, the initial response from the MTPD specialized units, or the actions upon conclusion of the bomb threat event.

The facility-specific emergency action plan for the Alexandria Rail Facility C94 Revenue Collection Facility does not provide specific guidance on bomb threats or evacuation protocols, such as having an accurate employee headcount conducted upon exiting the building, assigning evacuation captains or monitors to assure all personnel are clear of the building, or a contingency plan in place for a command structure in absence of emergency responders.

It is also noted that there was no adherence to the facility-specific emergency action plan. Specifically, "When contacting MOC (Maintenance Operations Center), be prepared to identify the facility name and address, the affected building(s), the nature of the emergency, the current status of the emergency, and any significant injuries known." The MOC was not contacted.

Chronological ARS Timeline

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

Time	Description
10:04:48 hours	SOCC: Transit Police MTPD Cruiser #1: Is there a call in the queue for a bomb threat at the revenue building? SOCC: No, we do not have anything. [Phone]
10:45:31 hours	SOCC: Transit Police MTPD Cruiser #2: This bomb threat at Alexandria. Do we have caller information on it? SOCC: No, we do not. It came over the radio. [Phone]
10:56:05 hours	MTPD Unit #3: Central, I will assume command at Alexandria Rail Yard. [MTPD 1X]
11:06:15 hours	SOCC: Any available crime scene. Report to revenue building. [MTPD 1X]
11:25:14 hours	MTPD Unit #3: Building has been cleared by K-9 and EOD [MTPD 1X]
11:37:03 hours	MTPD #3: Be advised all units are clear. [MTPD 2X]

Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)

See Appendix B. The report is redacted and abridged.

Weather

On November 17, 2022, at the time of the incident, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) recorded the temperature as 44° F, with passing clouds. Weather was not a contributing factor in this incident (Weather source: NOAA – Location: Alexandria, VA)

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 Toxicology Testing

Post-Incident Toxicology Testing was not conducted for this event.

Findings

- In response to the letter received through the United States Postal Service (USPS) of a bomb threat, the Revenue Collection Facility at the Alexandria Rail Yard was evacuated.
- No evidence of an explosive device or the person that placed the letter in the United States mail system about the bomb threat following the sweep of the interior and exterior of the building.
- No individuals were injured, and no property was damaged by this incident.
- Individuals did not follow established communication protocols defined in the Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRSH) or SOP #1A.

Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence

- The Alexandria Revenue Collection Facility was evacuated.
- MTPD and K-9 personnel conducted a sweep of the Alexandria Revenue Collection Facility.

Related Rules and Procedures

- WMATA SOP #1A - Command, Control, and Coordination of Emergencies on the Rail System.
 - 3.8 *On-Scene Commander (OSC): The first MTPD Officer or Official that arrives at the scene of the incident will be the OSC and control WMATA resources and assist the IC in managing the scene. The OSC Commander may be appointed by ROCC until the arrival of the MTPD.*
- WMATA SOP #14 - Bomb Threats/Suspicious Packages/Unattended Items

- 14.5.1.4 MTPD will be responsible for the overall coordination of Bomb Threat or related incidents.-If local police and/or Fire Department personnel are required to respond to the threat location, MTPD will be the WMATA OSC per SOP 1A.
- 14.5.1.5 MTPD is responsible for determining if facilities are to be evacuated or closed.
- Facility-Specific Emergency Action Plan for Alexandria Rail Facility C94 Revenue Collection Facility
 - The purpose of this Facility-Specific Emergency Action Plan is to facilitate, organize and define both employer and employee actions during workplace emergencies. This plan covers typical emergency situations and provides a general process for responding to most situations one could reasonably expect. In addition to this EAP, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) provides potentially affected employees with specialized training on subjects such as active shooter, terrorism threats, civil unrest and hazardous materials releases.

Probable Cause Statement

The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event of the Revenue Collection Facility at the Alexandria Rail Yard on November 17, 2022, was due to criminal action via a letter from an unknown person threatening to bomb the location.

Recommended Corrective Actions

Corrective Action Code	Description	Responsible Party	Estimated Completion Date
104575_SAFE CAPS_TRES_01	Develop a Lessons-Learned document specifying the importance of using established communication procedures for emergencies with contact telephone numbers and department titles.	TRES	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_TRES_02	TRES reviews SOP #1A and ensures all personnel know its content.	TRES	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_TRES_03	TRES conducts evacuation drills for scenarios other than fire drills. And establish evacuation captains to account for personnel during drills.	TRES	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_TRES_04	TRES conducts an After-Action Review (AAR) in collaboration with MTPD and OEP to develop an internal SOP specific to the bomb threat, including evidence handling, communication procedures, and evacuation procedures.	TRES	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_MTPD_05	MTPD management conducts a safety talk with all officers related to effective radio communications with the Security Operations Control Center (SOCC)	MTPD	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_MTPD_06	MTPD reviews SOP #1A and ensure all personnel knows its content.	MTPD	04/30/23
104575_SAFE CAPS_MTPD_07	MTPD ensures that events are communicated with all security personnel at a location with the most critical elements emphasized.	MTPD	04/30/23

Appendix A – Interview Summary

TRES

Director, Revenue Operations

The Director is a WMATA employee with 13 years of experience with Revenue Collections.

The Director stated that they received the letter of a bomb threat directed at the Revenue Collection Facility. Upon reading the letter notified their supervisor and a member of the MTPD via telephone. A decision was made to evacuate the revenue collection facility. Employees in the building were directed to go home. Upon arrival of MTPD, the Director informed MTPD that there had not been any non-WMATA personnel or WMATA contractors in the building for about a year. The Director stated that MTPD communication control center was not contacted, as they contacted their MTPD liaison first.

TRES

Manager, Technical Operations

The Manager is a WMATA employee with 10 years of experience.

The Manager stated that they prepared the building for assessment by emergency response personnel by unlocking all the revenue collection facility doors upon being informed of the bomb threat. Once all doors were open, they alerted all personnel on duty to evacuate the building and depart the location. Accounting for/of personnel who left the building was not conducted.

MTPD

Sergeant, Special Police Officer

The Sergeant is a WMATA employee with seven years of experience.

The Sergeant stated they were on duty at the Alexandria Rail Yard, relieving a Special Police Officer for a meal break during the bomb threat. As emergency response vehicles (i.e., police vehicles) entered the location and proceeded to the Revenue Collection Facility, they were not advised of what was transpiring. They were never given a situation briefing on the bomb threat or informed when it was cleared.

Appendix B – MTPD Event Report



Event Report			
Metro Transit Police Department		ORI-DCMTP0000	
Type of Report	MTPD CCN	Local Jurisdiction	Local CCN
Open	2022-06729-001	Alexandria, VA	

Event Location					
Street	Station Acronym	City, State	County	MTP District	Local District
3301 Eisenhower Ave		ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314	ALX- Alexandria City	District 2	ALX-Alexandria City
Date and Time of Event			Date and Time Reported		
From To			11/17/2022 10:32:28 AM		
11/17/2022 10:32:00 AM					
Category					
Rail Station, Line or Right-of-Way	On Bus		Property		Other
			Property Rail Yard		MSA4
Specific Location (Foot Bridge, Kiosk, Platform, Tracks, Etc.)			For Burglary or B&E Only		
			If Hotel Rule Applies, #Premises or Facilities Entered:		
Location Description					
Property Rail Yard					

Event Information			
If Incident Use This Block	Offense #	Bomb Threat	
Incident Classification	Offense Classification	A	
Incident Description	Description	Bomb Threat	
	Weapon/Force Type of Activity	/None/Unknown	
Entry Type:		Number Premises Entered:	
Hate Crime Motivation: None (no bias) (mutually exclusive)			
Bias Motivation			
None (no bias) (mutually exclusive)			
Offender Suspected of Using:		Modus Operandi (MO):	
Case Status Information		If Case Cleared Exceptionally,	Clearance Date
Case Status (Completed by the Official who signs this report):			
Reporting Officer (Print)	Badge #	Second Officer (Print)	Badge #
Supervisor's Name (Electronically Approved)		Teletype	Investigator Notified ID#
		#	

MTPD CCN:
ORI-DCMTP0000

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Has a DVR been requested?
Narrative Information

A written bomb threat was received at the WMATA revenue building. K9 sweeps were conducted with nothing found. Lt. [REDACTED] notified TSOC which generated report #TSA-11-37598-22.

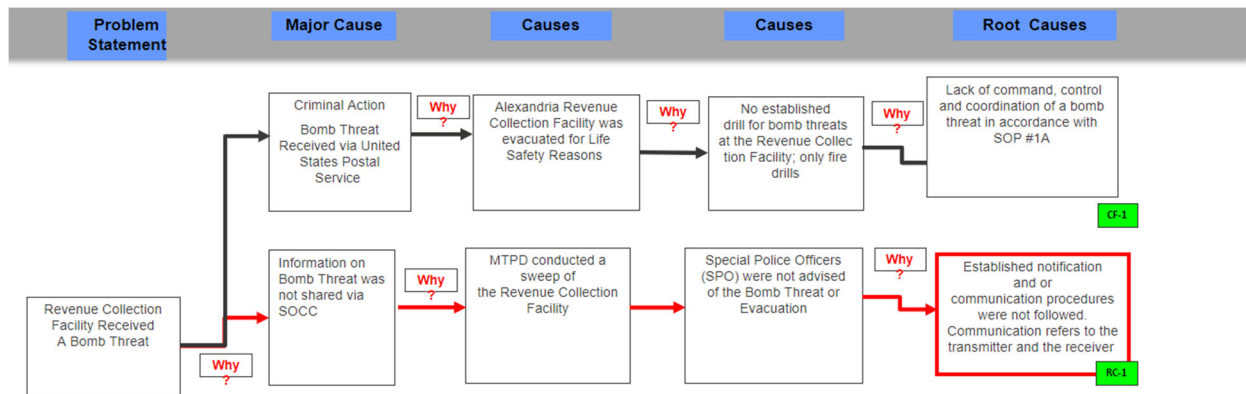
If second CCN is available, insert here:

Additional Narrative on Supplemental Report

MTPD CCN:
ORI-DCMTP0000

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Appendix C – Root Cause Analysis



Root Cause Analysis

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

