



**WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0240 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Rosslyn Station – March 24, 2023**

*Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on August 8, 2023*

**Safety event summary:**

On Friday, March 24, 2023, Rosslyn Station and an Orange Line train were evacuated, and trains were instructed to bypass the station, due to an unattended bag left aboard a train.

At 5:41 p.m., a rider aboard Train 907 notified the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Security Operations Control Center that another rider left a “suspicious military style backpack,” cell phone, and headset on rail car 7547. The rider reported they were between West Falls Church and East Falls Church stations, travelling toward downtown Washington and New Carrollton.

An MTPD Dispatcher dispatched MTPD Units and contacted a Rail Traffic Controller in the Rail Operations Control Center to request the train be held at Rosslyn Station for the report of an unattended package.

Train 907 arrived at Rosslyn Station at 5:54 p.m. and at 6:01 p.m., riders were offloaded from the train onto the platform. MTPD personnel searched the train and located the unattended items. At 6:09 p.m., train service was suspended at Rosslyn Station, with trains bypassing the station via Track 2.

MTPD had Rosslyn Station evacuated at 6:15 p.m., 21 minutes after the train carrying the suspicious bag arrived at the station.

MTPD later determined that the bag was not a threat, and, at 6:50 p.m., cleared the station to reopen.

**Probable Cause:**

The probable cause of this event was a rider inadvertently leaving personal items on board a train.

**Corrective Actions:**

Example of related open CAP

- C-0177 addresses the finding that MTPD does not have a useable incident checklist for emergencies. (Completion date September 2023)



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority  
Department of Safety (SAFE)  
Office of Safety Investigations (OSI)  
**FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I E23197**

<b>Date of Event:</b>	March 24, 2023
<b>Type of Event:</b>	Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons
<b>Incident Time:</b>	17:44 hours
<b>Location:</b>	Rosslyn Station
<b>Time and How received by SAFE:</b>	17:44 hours - SAFE MAC
<b>WMSC Notification Time:</b>	19:44 hours
<b>Responding Safety Officers:</b>	WMATA: Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) WMSC: N/A Other: N/A
<b>Rail Vehicle:</b>	Train ID 907 L7374-7375, 7291-7290, 7546-7547, 7503-7502T
<b>Injuries:</b>	None
<b>Damage:</b>	None
<b>Emergency Responders:</b>	Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)
<b>SMS I/A Incident Number:</b>	20230407#107499

# Rosslyn Station – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

March 24, 2023

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## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

<b>ARS</b>	Audio Recording System
<b>BOCC</b>	Bus Operations Communications Center
<b>CAP</b>	Corrective Action Plan
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed-Circuit Television
<b>EOD</b>	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
<b>MAC</b>	Mission Assurance Coordinator
<b>MSRPH</b>	Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook
<b>MTPD</b>	Metro Transit Police Department
<b>NOAA</b>	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>OEP</b>	Office of Emergency Preparedness
<b>RTRA</b>	Office of Rail Transportation
<b>ROCC</b>	Rail Operations Control Center
<b>ROIC</b>	Rail Operations Information Center
<b>SAFE</b>	Department of Safety
<b>SMS</b>	Safety Measurement System
<b>SOCC</b>	Security Operations Control Center
<b>SPOTS</b>	System Performance On-Time Summary
<b>WMATA</b>	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
<b>WMSC</b>	Washington Metrorail Safety Commission

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

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**Executive Summary**

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

On March 24, 2023, at 17:41 hours, a customer aboard Train ID 907 (L7374-7375, 7291-7290, 7546-7547, 7503-7502T) located between West Falls Church Station and East Falls Church Station, track 1 contacted the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Security Operations Control Center (SOCC) and reported a person exited the train and left behind a suspicious military-style backpack, cell phone and headset on rail car 7547. At 17:48 hours, MTPD contacted the Button RTC, advised them of the report, and requested to hold Train ID 907 at Rosslyn Station for an unattended bag.

MTPD Units were dispatched and were able to intercept Train ID 907 at Rosslyn Station. After inspecting the train, the unattended bag was located on rail car 7547 on a seat adjacent to the door leading to the platform.

At 18:13 hours, train service to Rosslyn Station was suspended and all customers were evacuated from the station and a bus bridge was established.

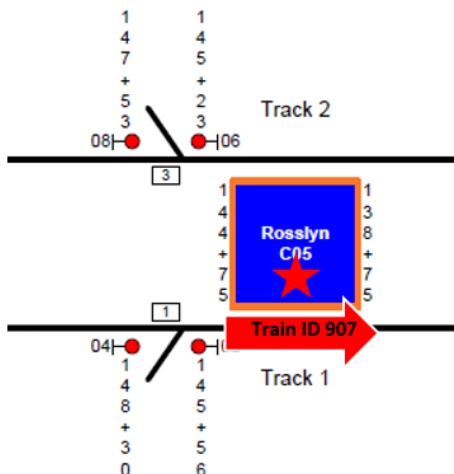
MTPD dispatched the Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) Unit to inspect the bag. The bag was inspected, and it was determined that the bag did not contain any harmful materials. At 18:51 hours, Rosslyn Station was re-opened to customers. There were no injuries or damage resulting from this event.

The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event on March 24, 2024, at Rosslyn Station was a customer leaving property behind when exiting the train. There were no significant findings or deficiencies related to this event.

**Incident Site**

Rosslyn Station, Track 1.

**Field Sketch/Schematics**



*The above depiction is not to scale.*

## **Purpose and Scope**

This incident investigation and candid self-evaluation aims 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 Methods**

Upon receiving notification of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at the Rosslyn Station on March 24, 2023, 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:

- 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 by personnel present during the event.
- Documentation Review – A collection of relevant work history information and process documentation in Metro record systems. These records include the following:
  - Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRPH)
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- System Data Recording Review – A collection of information in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
  - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback
  - System Performance On-Time Summary (Spots)
  - Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)

## **Investigation**

On March 24, 2023, at 17:41 hours, a customer aboard Train ID 907 (L7374-7375, 7291-7290, 7546-7547, 7503-7502T) located between West Falls Church Station and East Falls Church Station, track 1 contacted the MTPD SOCC and reported a person exited the train and left behind a suspicious military-style backpack, cell phone and headset on rail car 7547.

The Audio Recording System (ARS) playback revealed that at 17:48 hours, MTPD instructed Units to respond to Rosslyn Station to intercept Train ID 907. An MTPD Unit reported that they were located at Rosslyn Station. MTPD contacted the Button RTC, advised them of the report, and requested to hold Train ID 907 at Rosslyn Station for an unattended bag. MTPD Dispatch instructed MTPD EOD to respond to Rosslyn Station.

At 17:53 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 907 to be governed by MTPD upon arriving at Rosslyn Station. At 17:54 hours, Train ID 907 arrived at Rosslyn Station on track 1.

The Button RTC notified ROIC that Train ID 907 would hold at Rosslyn Station for a report of an unattended bag. At 17:56 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 453 located at Arlington Cemetery, track 1 to hold and Train ID 601 to hold at Court House Station, track 1 at 17:57 hours.

At 17:58 hours, MTPD advised that an Office of Rail Transportation (RTRA) Rail Supervisor was on scene at Rosslyn Station. At 18:00 hours, MTPD EOD arrived at Rosslyn Station.

At 18:01 hours, the Assistant Operations Manager (AOM) instructed the Button RTC to have Train ID 907 offload and begin single tracking. At 18:01 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 907 to offload the train. At 18:04 hours, the Rail Supervisor reported the train was clear of customers.

At 18:09 hours, the Radio RTC instructed trains to bypass Rosslyn Station via track 2.

At 18:13 hours, MTPD established Incident Command at Rosslyn Station at the upper-level mezzanine. At 18:14 hours, the Rail Operations Information Control (ROIC) contacted the Bus Operations Communications Center (BOCC) and requested a bus bridge. At 18:15 hours, ROIC instructed the Station Manager at Rosslyn Station to evacuate.

MTPD located the unattended bag on rail car 7547 on a seat adjacent to the platform. MTPD EOD Unit inspected the bag and determined that there were no visible hazards and removed the bag from the train.

At 18:50 hours, Incident Command reported to the MTPD Dispatch that Rosslyn Station was clear to resume normal train service. At 18:51 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 903 to service Rosslyn Station, track 2.

At 18:54 hours, Train ID 907 departed Rosslyn Station on track 1 and resumed service at Foggy Bottom Station. The Incident Command post was terminated.

### Chronological ARS Timeline

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

Time	Description
17:41:24 hours	A Customer contacted MTPD and reported a person left a bag on an Orange Line train, car number 7547. [Phone SOCC Console 5B]
17:46:43 hours	MTPD Unit located at West Falls Church Station advised MTPD Dispatch that they received the notification of the unattended package and requested to have the train held. [MTPD 1X]
17:47:08 hours	MTPD EOD located at L'Enfant Plaza Station advised MTPD Dispatch that they were en route. [Radio MTPD 1X]
17:47:40 hours	<u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Advised MTPD Units that the train was located at Ballston Station. [MTPD 1X]
17:48:02 hours	<u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Requested MTPD Units located at Rosslyn Station. [MTPD 1X]
17:48:06 hours	<u>MTPD Unit</u> : Advised MTPD Dispatch that they were located at Rosslyn Station. <u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Instructed MTPD Unit to intercept Train ID 907 for an unattended backpack. <u>MTPD Unit</u> : Acknowledged and requested to have the train held at Rosslyn Station. [MTPD 1X]
17:48:25 hours	MTPD contacted the Button RTC and requested to hold Train ID 907 at Rosslyn Station for an unattended bag. [Radio SOCC 5A]

<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>
17:48:54 hours	<u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Instructed MTPD EOD to respond to Rosslyn Station. <u>MTPD EOD</u> : Acknowledged. [Radio MTPD 1X]
17:53:49 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed Train ID 907 to be governed by MTPD upon arriving at Rosslyn Station. <u>Train ID 907</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 2]
17:54:24 hours	Train ID 907 arrived at Rosslyn Station, track 1. [Spots]
17:54:34 hours	<u>Button RTC</u> : Notified ROIC that Train ID 907 would hold at Rosslyn for an unattended bag. [Phone Ops 2]
17:56:02 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed Train ID 453 located at Arlington Cemetery, track 1 to hold. <u>Train ID 453</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 2]
17:57:09 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed Train ID 601 located at Court House, track 1 to hold. <u>Train ID 601</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 2]
17:58:31 hours	<u>MTPD Unit</u> : Advised a Rail Supervisor was on scene. <u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Acknowledged. [Radio MTPD 1X]
18:00:06 hours	<u>MTPD Unit</u> : Advised MTPD EOD on scene and requested to offload the train. <u>MTPD Dispatch</u> : Acknowledged. [Radio MTPD 1X]
18:01:04 hours	<u>AOM</u> : Instructed the Button RTC to have Train ID 907 offload and begin single tracking. <u>Button RTC</u> : Acknowledged. [Radio Rail 1]
18:01:20 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed Train ID 907 to offload the train. <u>Train ID 907</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. <u>Rail Supervisor</u> : Reported located at Rosslyn Station and would verify the train was clear of customers. [Radio Ops 2]
18:04:53 hours	<u>Rail Supervisor</u> : Reported located Train ID 907 was clear of customers. [Radio Ops 2]
18:09:39 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed trains to bypass Rosslyn Station via track 2. [Radio Ops 2]
18:13:51 hours	MTPD established Incident Command at Rosslyn Station at the upper-level mezzanine. [Radio MTPD 1X]
18:14:49 hours	<u>ROIC</u> : Contacted BOCC and requested a Bus Bridge. [Phone ROIC Lead]
18:15:03 hours	<u>ROIC</u> : Instructed the Station Manager at Rosslyn Station to evacuate. [Phone RCOM 1]
18:15:00 to 18:50:00	MTPD EOD performed an inspection of the unattended bag.
18:50:28 hours	<u>Incident Command</u> : Reported the bag had been inspected with negative results and advised that the station could re-open. [MTPD 2X]
18:50:53 hours	<u>Rail Supervisor</u> : Reported MTPD cleared Rosslyn Station for normal train service. <u>Radio RTC</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 2]
18:51:14 hours	<u>Radio RTC</u> : Instructed Train ID 903 to service Rosslyn Station, track 2. <u>Train ID 903</u> : Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 2]
18:54:15 hours	Train ID 907 departed Rosslyn Station, track 1. [Spots]
18:54:18 hours	<u>Incident Command</u> : Reported the Command Post would be terminated. [MTPD 2X]

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



## **Weather**

On March 24, 2023, at the time of the incident, NOAA recorded the temperature as 55° F, with drizzle. [Arlington, Virginia]. The weather did not contribute to this incident (Weather source: NOAA – Location: Arlington, Virginia).

## **Related Rules and Procedures**

- SOP #14 – Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package/Unattended Package
- SOP #1A – Command, Control and Coordination of Emergencies on the Rail System
- SSOP #4 – Emergency, 4.5.2. Reporting Emergencies Procedures

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

A review of the MTPD Event Report and Hotwash did not identify any concerns or deficiencies with the response and recovery from the event.

## **Findings**

- A Customer left a backpack unattended on Train ID 907.
- MTPD Units responded and ordered the station evacuated while the package was assessed.

## **Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence**

- ROCC, RTRA, and MTPD coordinated to mitigate the incident.
- ROCC instructed trains to bypass Rosslyn Station.
- SOP 1A was implemented
- ROIC requested shuttle bus services.
- MTPD EOD inspected the unattended bag.

## **Probable Cause Statement**


The probable cause of the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event on March 24, 2024, at Rosslyn Station was a customer leaving property behind when exiting the train. There were no significant findings or deficiencies related to this event.

## **Recommended Corrective Actions**

There are no Recommended Corrective Actions associated with this event.

**Appendices**

**Appendix A - Metro Transit Police Department Event Report**

	<b>Event Report</b>		ORI-DCMTP0000
<b>Metro Transit Police Department</b>		<i>Type of Report</i>	<i>MTPD CCN</i>
Closed		2023-02465	<i>Local Jurisdiction</i> Arlington, VA

<b>Event Location</b>	
<i>Street</i> 1850 N Moore St	<i>City, State</i> ARLINGTON, VA 22209
<i>Date and Time of Event</i>	
<i>From</i> 3/24/2023 5:44:00 PM	<i>To</i> 3/24/2023 5:44:17 PM
<i>Date and Time Reported</i>	
3/24/2023 5:44:17 PM	
<i>Reporting Officer (Print)</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Badge #</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Second Officer (Print)</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Badge #</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Supervisor's Name (Electronically Approved)</i> [REDACTED]	
<b>Incidents</b>	
<i>Incident:</i> Suspicious Package	<i>Location Type:</i> Rail Station
<i>Incident Detail:</i> [REDACTED]	
<b>Involved Party</b>	
<i>Last Name, First MI:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>DOB:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Address Type:</i> H - Home	<i>Address (Street) City, State Zip:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Address Type:</i> H - Home	<i>Address (Street) City, State Zip:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Type Phone:</i> M - Mobile	<i>Phone Number:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Email:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Age:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Sex:</i> Male
<i>Race:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Ethnicity:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Resident Status:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Description:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Height:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Weight:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Eyes Color:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Complex:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Clothing:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Driver's License #:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>D/L State:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>SSN:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Occupation:</i> [REDACTED]	<i>Place of Employment:</i> [REDACTED]
<i>Place of Birth:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Work/School Address - Addl. Contact Info:</i> [REDACTED]	
<i>Notes:</i> [REDACTED]	
<b>Property Information</b>	

MTPD CCN: ORI-DCMTP0000 Event Report Page 1 of 4

Attachment 1 – MTPD Event Report, Page 1 of 4

Incident Date: 03/24/2023 Time: 17:44 hours  
 Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons  
 E23197

Drafted By: SAFE 711 – 05/04/2023  
 Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 05/23/2023  
 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 05/23/2023

Type	Code	Class	WMATA Owned	Age	Fair Market Value	Recovered Value	Recovered Date
Backpack/Duffer Bag	77						
Value Totals							
Veh. Year	Make	Model	Color	Style	Tag #	State	Year
			GRN-Green				
Property Recovered Date	# Stolen Vehicles	# Recovered Vehicles	Is any property in custody of a police agency? (If Yes, explain below)				
Property Status							
<b>Information Only</b>							
Suspected Drug Type (If this event is a drug case, check up to three applicable boxes and write the estimated amount on the line.)							
Note: If more than 3 drug types, select the 2 most important listing amounts. Then select "Over 3 Drug Types", as the third, to represent the remaining drugs.							
Property Notes:							
Narrative Information							
EOD-█ responded to RSLY for the report of an suspicious military style back pack. The item was x-rayed. There were no visible explosive hazards. █ notified █ at 2000 hours, █.							
If second CCN is available, insert here:				Additional Narrative on Supplemental Report			

MTPD CCN:  
ORI-DCMTP0000

Event Report Page 2 of 4

Attachment 1 – MTPD Event Report, Page 2 of 4

Incident Date: 03/24/2023 Time: 17:44 hours  
Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons  
E23197

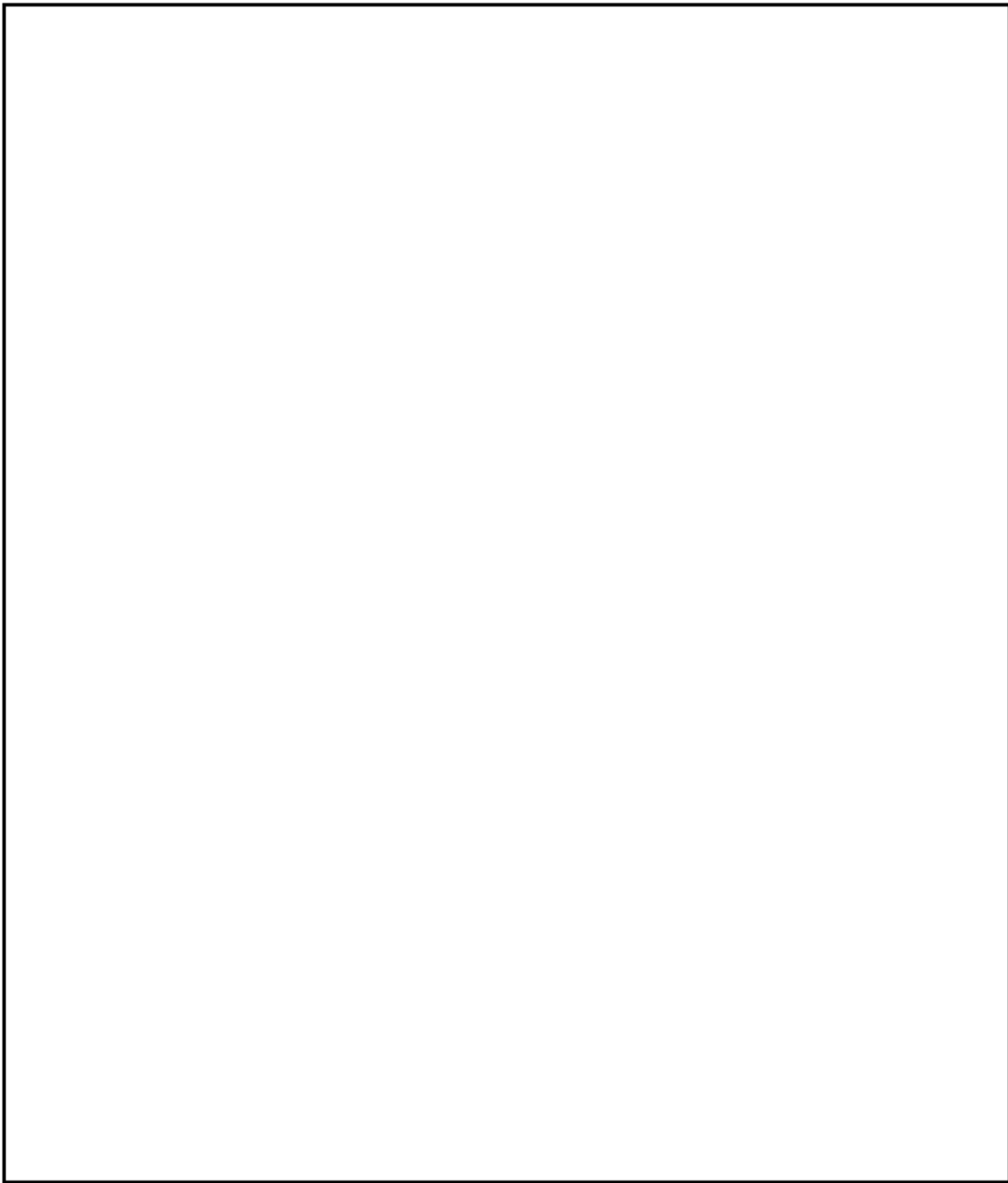
Drafted By: SAFE 711 – 05/04/2023  
Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 05/23/2023  
Approved By: SAFE 71 – 05/23/2023

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Additional Narrative

On March 24, 2023 at approximately 1744 hours at the Rosslyn Metro Rail Station, located at 1850 N. Moore St. Arlington, VA 22209, Ofc. [REDACTED] responded to train #907, car #7547, for the report of an unattended green military style back pack with a phone and headphones. Ofc. [REDACTED] located the bag in the middle of the train car in a seat adjacent to the platform. Ofc. [REDACTED] notified the responding Canine and Hazardous Devices Technician (HDT) of the unusual placement of the mostly filled military style back pack on a rush hour train heading into the densely populated core metro transfer stations. Ofc. [REDACTED] also noted the bags orientation to a cell phone and headphones (see attached picture), as if someone had abruptly left it there. No one aboard the train claimed ownership of the bag. The bags classification was elevated to suspicious. Single tracking was initially suggested but the safe ingress/egress of patrons would be impossible due to the bags location directly next to the escalators ascending/descending to the lower level. R/O made the request to bypass the station at 1813 hours and all patrons were removed from the rail station. A bus bridge was requested. Ofc. [REDACTED] EOD [REDACTED] donned the bomb suit and x-rayed the back pack. There were no visible hazards. A physical inspection of the bag revealed personal items to include documents which identified the owner. The owner was contacted. Rail service was returned at 1851 hours. The owner returned and advised he fell asleep and forgot his bag when he abruptly woke up to exit the train. The bag was returned to the owner, [REDACTED] and Rail Supervisor [REDACTED] manned the command post on the lower level mezzanine.

Sgt. [REDACTED] notified TSOC [REDACTED] at 2000 hours, [REDACTED]



MTPD CCN:  
ORI-DCMTP0000

Event Report Page 4 of 4

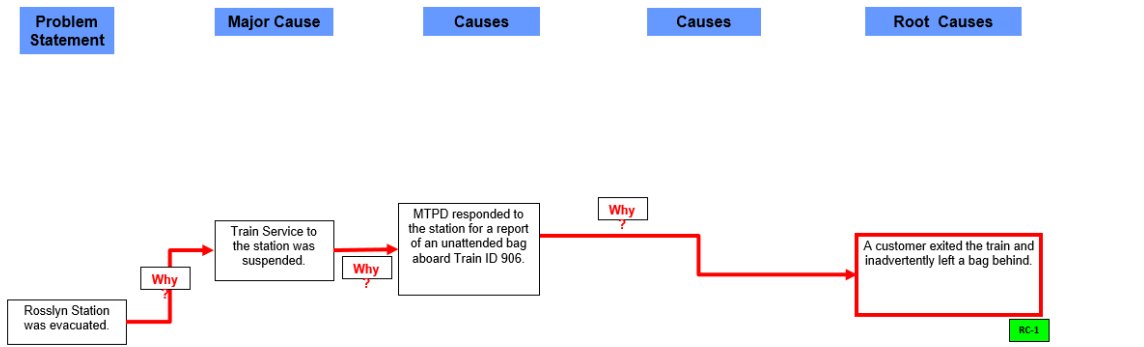
Attachment 1 – MTPD Event Report, Page 4 of 4

Incident Date: 03/24/2023 Time: 17:44 hours  
Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons  
E23197

Drafted By: SAFE 711 – 05/04/2023  
Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 05/23/2023  
Approved By: SAFE 71 – 05/23/2023

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# Appendix B – Root Cause Analysis



## Root Cause Analysis

