

Office: 202-384-1520 · Website: www.wmsc.gov

WMSC Commissioner Brief: W-0252 – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons – Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport Station – September 3, 2023

Prepared for Washington Metrorail Safety Commission meeting on January 23, 2024

Safety event summary:

Ronald Reagan National Airport Station and a Yellow Line train were evacuated on Sunday, September 3, 2023, due to a report of a suspicious package aboard a train.

At approximately 4:31 p.m., a rider contacted the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Security Operations Control Center and reported that they observed someone throw a box onto Yellow Line Train 301 at Gallery Place-Chinatown Station before the train departed toward Huntington Station.

An MTPD Dispatcher requested units respond to inspect the train, and an MTPD Officer responded that they would intercept the train at Ronald Reagan National Airport Station. MTPD notified the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) of the reported suspicious package at 4:39 p.m., when an MTPD Dispatcher requested ROCC personnel direct the Train Operator to hold the train when it arrived at Ronald Reagan National Airport Station. The Train Operator followed the instructions to continue in service, then hold the train at Ronald Reagan National Airport Station. MTPD requested assistance from the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority which has first responders (police and fire) at the airport.

The train arrived at the station at 4:44 p.m. An MTPD Officer located the suspicious package on railcar 3167. Riders were evacuated from the train at 4:53 p.m.

At 4:56 p.m., MTPD established incident command and the Radio Rail Traffic Controller instructed trains to service the station via track 3 (the center track that permits door operations on either of the two island platforms). At 5:03 p.m., Incident Command requested that trains only service the station on track 1.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit arrived at 5:35 p.m. At 5:45 p.m., service was suspended at the station and trains were instructed to hold on the platform at Crystal City and Potomac Yard stations.

At 6:02 p.m., the EOD unit determined the item was not hazardous and at 6:07 p.m., normal service resumed at the station.

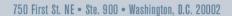
During this event there were delayed notifications between departments resulting in incomplete situational awareness and delays in response.

Distorted radio communications were also noted between the Mission Assurance Coordinator and Incident Command. Metrorail Office of Radio Communications personnel reported that they conducted follow up checks that had no trouble found (see CAP C-0217 below).

Probable Cause:

The probable cause of this event was a rider intentionally placing an item aboard a train. Contributing factors to the response-related deficiencies are Metrorail's delayed and incomplete internal communications.

Corrective Actions:





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Examples of other related open CAPs

 C-0217 addresses the finding that Metrorail personnel are not effectively communicating, responding to and identifying issues related to trouble calls pertaining to communications systems. Metrorail closes communications-related "corrective maintenance" (repair) tickets without effectively identifying, documenting and addressing issues. (Expected completion date May 2025)



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Department of Safety (SAFE) Office of Safety Investigations (OSI)

FINAL REPORT OF INVESTIGATION A&I 23616

Date of Event:	September 3, 2023				
Type of Event:	A-4: Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons				
Incident Time:	16:39 Hours				
Location:	Ronald Regan Washington National Airport Station,				
	track 2				
Time and How received by SAFE:	16:39 Hours – SAFE/MAC				
WMSC Notification Time:	19:01 Hours				
Responding Safety Officers:	WMATA: Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP)				
	WMSC: None				
	Other: None				
Rail Vehicle:	Train ID 301				
	L3166/67x3026/27x2047/46T				
Injuries:	None				
Damage:	None				
Emergency Responders:	Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD)				
	Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA)				
	Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)				
SMS I/A Incident Number:	20230909#111268				

National Airport Station - Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

Drafted By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 11/02/2023

September 3, 2023

Table of Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms	3
Executive Summary	4
Incident Site	4
Field Sketch/Schematics	5
Purpose and Scope	5
Investigative Methods	5
Investigation	6
Chronological Event Timeline	8
Office of Systems Maintenance, Office of Radio Communications (COMR)	
Weather	
Related Rules and Procedures	10
Human Factors	
Fatigue	
Post-Incident Toxicology Testing	
Findings	10
Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence	10
Probable Cause Statement	10
Recommended Corrective Actions	
Appendices	 12
Appendix A – MTPD Hot Wash Summary	
Appendix B – RTRA Supervisor's Report	
Appendix C – Why-Tree Analysis	
Appendix o Willy 1100 Analysis	I /

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIMS Advanced Information Management System

ARS Audio Recording System

CCTV Closed-Circuit Television

DVEU Digital Video Evidence Unit

EOD Explosive Ordnance Disposal

MOR Metrorail Operating Rulebook

MTPD Metro Transit Police Department

MWAA Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

NOAA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

OEP Office of Emergency Preparedness

OM Operations Manager

ROCC Rail Operations Control Center

ROIC Rail Operations Information Center

RTRA Office of Rail Transportation

SAFE Department of Safety

SMS Safety Measurement System

SOCC Security Operations Control Center

SPOTS System Performance On-Time Summary

WMATA Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

WMSC Washington Metrorail Safety Commission

E23616

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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 Sunday, September 3, 2023, at 16:31 hours, a customer contacted the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) Security Operations Control Center (SOCC) and reported that another customer threw a box onto a train (Train ID 301 - L3166/67x3026/27x2047/46T) at Gallery Place – Chinatown Station (Gallery Place Station) on track 2 as the train doors closed, and the other customer did not board the train.

At 16:36 hours, the MTPD Dispatcher requested units to respond and check Train ID 301. An MTPD Officer advised that they would meet the train at Ronald Reagan National Airport Station (National Airport). At 16:39 hours, MTPD contacted the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) Button Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) and requested that Train ID 301 be held at National Airport for a suspicious package.

At 16:41 hours, MTPD SOCC contacted the Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority (MWAA) Operations Center and requested a response from the bomb unit. At 16:43 hours, the Button RTC notified the Operations Manager (OM) of the report.

At 16:44 hours, the MTPD Officer and Train ID 301 arrived at National Airport Station. The MTPD Officer reported locating the package on rail car 3167 at 16:47 hours. The Radio RTC instructed the Train Operator to offload the train.

At 16:50 hours, the Button RTC notified the Rail Operations Information Center (ROIC) of the report. At 16:53 hours, ROIC instructed the Station Managers at National Airport Station to report to the platform and assist with offloading and redirecting the customers.

At 16:56 hours, MTPD established the Command Post at the kiosk. An Office of Rail Transportation (RTRA) Rail Supervisor arrived at National Airport Station.

At 17:35 hours, the MTPD Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit arrived at National Airport Station. At 17:45 hours, train service was suspended at National Airport Station while the package was evaluated.

At 18:02 hours, EOD reported that the package, all personnel and equipment were clear, and normal service could resume. MTPD turned the scene over to the Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP).

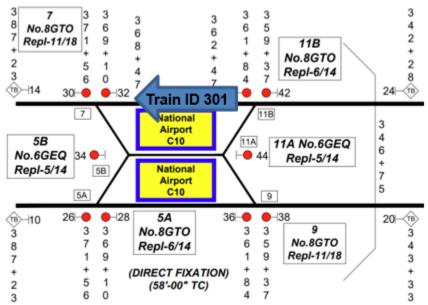
At 18:07 hours, the Radio RTC announced that train service could resume at National Airport Station. At 18:12 hours, OEP terminated the Command Post.

The probable cause for the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event at National Airport Station was due to a person throwing a package onto the train prior to the train departing Gallery Place Station.

Incident Site

National Airport Station, track 2

Field Sketch/Schematics



The above depiction is 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

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 Collection of relevant work history information and process documentation contained in WMATA systems of record. These records include:
 - Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR)
 - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
 - MTPD Hot Wash Report
 - RTRA Supervisor's Report
- System Data Recording Review Collection of information contained in Metro Data Recording Systems. This data includes:
 - Audio Recording System (ARS) playback, include OPS 3 Radio
 - Advanced Information Management System (AIMS)
 - Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)
 - System Performance on Time Summary (SPOTS)

<u>Investigation</u>

On Sunday, September 3, 2023, at 16:29 hours, Train ID 301 arrived at Gallery Place Station on track 2. As the customers were alighting the train, a person threw a package onto the train prior to the train doors closing. At 16:30 hours, Train ID 301 departed at Gallery Place Station towards Huntington Station.

The Audio Recording System (ARS) revealed that at 16:31 hours, a customer contacted the MTPD Communications Center and reported that they observed another customer throw a box onto the train (Train ID 301 - L3166/67x3026/27x2047/46T) at Gallery Place Station on track 2 as the train doors closed, and the other customer did not board the train.

At 16:36 hours, the MTPD Dispatcher requested units to respond and check Train ID 301. An MTPD Officer advised that they would meet the train at National Airport Station.

At 16:39 hours, MTPD SOCC contacted the ROCC Button RTC and requested that Train ID 301 be held at National Airport Station for a suspicious package. At 16:40 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 301 to hold upon arriving at National Airport Station.

At 16:41 hours, MTPD SOCC contacted the MWAA Operations Center and requested a response from their bomb unit. At 16:43 hours, the Button RTC notified the OM of the report.

At 16:44 hours, the MTPD Officer and Train ID 301 arrived at National Airport Station. The Radio RTC Instructed Train ID 401 to hold at Crystal City Station. The MTPD Officer reported locating the package on rail car 3167 at 16:47 hours.

At 16:50 hours, the Button RTC notified the ROIC of the report. At 16:53 hours, the Radio RTC instructed the Train Operator to offload the train. The ROIC Controller instructed the Station Managers at National Airport Station to report to the platform and assist with offloading and redirecting the customers. The Mission Assurance Coordinator (MAC) dispatched OEP personnel to National Airport Station.

At 16:56 hours, MTPD established the Command Post at the kiosk and advised that an RTRA Rail Supervisor was located at National Airport Station. The Radio RTC announced that trains arriving on track 2 would service National Airport Station via track 3. At 16:58 hours, Train ID 401 arrived at National Airport Station on track 3.

At 17:03 hours, the Incident Commander requested that trains on tracks 1 and 3 service the platform on the track 1 platform only. At 17:06 hours, the Incident Commander reported that the platform was swept by K-9 with negative findings.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons E23616

Drafted By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Approved By: SAFE 71 – 11/02/2023

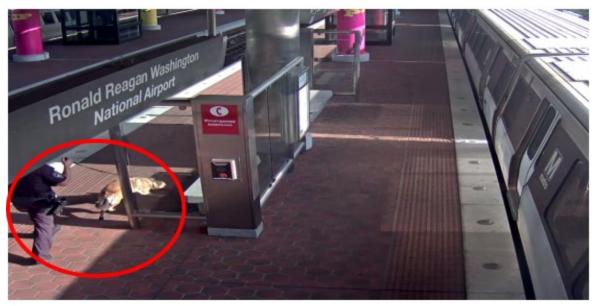


Image 1 – Image of the K-9 Unit performing a sweep at National Airport Station.

At 17:26 hours, the Digital Video Evidence Unit (DVEU) reported that after reviewing the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) at Gallery Place Station, no one was observed throwing a package onto the train.

At 17:35 hours, the Incident Commander advised that MTPD EOD arrived at National Airport Station, and the platform, station, and command post were swept by the K-9 with negative findings. At 17:45 hours, train service was suspended at National Airport Station.

At 17:48 hours, the Radio RTC Instructed Train ID 309 at Crystal City Station on track 2 to hold. At 17:49 hours, the Radio RTC instructed Train ID 402 at Potomac Yard Station on track 1 to hold. OEP personnel reported being located at National Airport Station.

At 18:02 hours, the Incident Commander reported that EOD cleared the package, all personnel and equipment were clear, and normal service could resume. MTPD turned the scene over to the OEP.

At 18:07 hours, the Radio RTC announced that train service could resume at National Airport Station.

At 18:12 hours, OEP terminated the Command Post at National Airport Station.

At 18:13 hours, Train ID 301 departed National Airport Station.

E23616

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Figure 1 – Train ID 301 departing National Airport Station at 18:13 hours.

Chronological Event Timeline

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

Time	Description
16:29:04 hours	Train ID 301 arrived at Gallery Place Station on track 2. [SPOTS]
16:30:55 hours	Train ID 301 departed at Gallery Place Station on track 2. [SPOTS]
16:31:11 hours	A customer contacted MTPD Communications and reported that another customer threw a box onto a train (Train ID 301) at Gallery Place Station as the train doors closed, and the other customer did not board the train. [Phone SOCC 5D]
16:36:37 hours	MTPD Dispatch: Requested units respond and check Train ID 301. MTPD Officer: Advised they would intercept the train at National Airport Station. [Radio MTPD 1X]
16:39:58 hours	MTPD SOCC: Requested that Train ID 301 hold at National Airport for a suspicious package. Button RTC: Acknowledged. [Phone Ops 3]
16:40:11 hours	Radio RTC: Instructed Train ID 301 to hold at National Airport Station and be governed by MTPD. Train ID 301: Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 3]
16:41:38 hours	MTPD SOCC: Requested a response from MWAA with a bomb detection unit. MWAA Operations: Acknowledged. [Phone SOCC 5D]
16:43:23 hours	Button RTC: Notified the OM of the report. [Phone Rail 1]
16:44:35 hours	Train ID 301 arrived at National Airport Station on track 2. [SPOTS]

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Time	Description
16:44:39 hours	Radio RTC: Instructed Train ID 401 to hold at Crystal City Station. Train ID 401: Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 3]
16:44:44 hours	MTPD arrived at National Airport Station. [CCTV]
16:47:12 hours	An MTPD Officer reported locating the package on rail car 3167. [Radio MTPD 1X]
16:50:55 hours	Button RTC: Notified the ROIC of the report. [Phone ROIC AD]
16:53:03 hours	Radio RTC: Instructed Train ID 301 to offload the train. Train ID 301: Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 3]
16:53:15 hours	MAC dispatched OEP personnel to National Airport Station. [Radio EMER MGMT]
16:53:35 hours	ROIC Controller: Instructed the Station Managers at National Airport Station to report to the platform to assist with offloading and redirecting the customers. [Radio ROIC AD]
16:56:25 hours	MTPD Officer: Reported establishing the Command Post at the kiosk, and a Rail Supervisor was on the scene. [Radio MTPD 1X]
16:56:28 hours	Radio RTC: Announced that trains would service National Airport Station via track 3. [Radio Ops 3]
16:58:49 hours	Train ID 401 arrived at National Airport Station on track 3. [SPOTS]
17:03:05 hours	Incident Command: Requested that trains on tracks 1 and 3 service the platform on track 1 platform only. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:06:02 hours	Incident Command: Reported the platform was swept by K-9 with negative findings. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:26:15 hours	<u>DVEU</u> : Reported reviewed CCTV of Gallery Place Station and did not observe anyone throwing a package onto the train. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:35:06 hours	Incident Command: Reported EOD arrived at National Airport Station. Reported the platform, station and command post was swept by K-9 with negative findings. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:45:10 hours	Incident Command: Requested that train service be suspended at National Airport Station to allow EOD to inspect the package. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:48:46 hours	Radio RTC: Instructed Train ID 309 at Crystal City Station on track 2 to hold. Train ID 309: Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 3]
17:49:18 hours	OEP reported located at National Airport Station. [Radio MTPD 2X]
17:49:21 hours	Radio RTC: Instructed Train ID 402 at Potomac Yard Station on track 1 to hold. Train ID 402: Acknowledged and repeated. [Radio Ops 3]
18:02:48 hours	Incident Command: Reported EOD had cleared the package, all personnel and equipment were clear, and normal service could resume. Turned the scene over to OEP. [Radio MTPD 2X]
18:07:16 hours	Radio RTC: Announced train service could resume at National Airport Station. [Radio Ops 3]
18:12:34 hours	<u>Incident Command</u> : OEP terminated the Command Post at National Airport Station. [Phone SAFE]
18:13:24 hours	Train ID 301 departed National Airport Station. [SPOTS]

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

Office of Systems Maintenance, Office of Radio Communications (COMR)

COMR conducted successful radio checks between Crystal City Station and Potomac Yard Station on tracks 1 and 2. All radio checks were loud and clear.

Weather

On September 3, 2023, at the time of the incident, NOAA recorded the temperature as 90°F, with clear skies, winds 7.6 mph, and 37% humidity. The weather was not a contributing factor in this incident (Weather source: NOAA) – Location: Alexandria, VA.

Related Rules and Procedures

Incident Management Standard: 1003-2-1/01 SOP #14 – Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package/Unattended Package

Human Factors

Fatigue

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

- The event was reported by a customer who observed another customer throw a box onto the train at Gallery Place Station. Neither customer was aboard the train.
- CCTV footage at Gallery Place Station did not capture the event.
- Passengers from Train ID 301 were offloaded from the train and led onto the platform on track 1.
- Radio communications between the MAC and Incident Commander were distorted at various times during the event.
- No evidence of explosives or hazardous materials were found.

Immediate Mitigation to Prevent Recurrence

- As part of the assessment, CCTV was reviewed to identify when the suspicious package was thrown onto the train and by whom.
- Train service was suspended at National Airport Station to allow EOD to examine and remove the suspicious package.

Probable Cause Statement

The probable cause for the Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons event at National Airport Station was due to a person throwing a package onto the train prior to the train departing Gallery Place Station.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons E23616

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Recommended Corrective Actions

There were no Recommended Corrective Actions for this event. No significant deficiencies were identified.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

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Appendix A – MTPD Hot Wash Summary

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.

there may be more than one IC during the incident.						
INCIDENT SUMMARY						
Incident Requiring ICS	Activation:	Suspicio	ous Package			
*Incident Commander (IC):						
MTPD CCN:	2023-10597		Local CCN:			
*Date ICS Initiated:	9/3/2023		*Time ICS Initiated:	4:52:00 PM		
*Date ICS Terminated:	9/3/2023		*Time ICS Terminated:	6:12:00 PM		
*Duration of Incident:	80 minutes		*Service Disrupted Disrupted Type: Disrupted Time:	N - No		
Incident Location:	2400 S Smith BLVD		Command Post Location:	South Side Kiosk		
MTPD On-Scene Commander (OSC):			Command Aid for OSC:			
Forward Liaison:			Unified Command:			
OCC Liaison:			Alternate Channel:	Y - Yes MTPD 2X		
Single Tracking Track No.: Time Started: Time End:	N - No					N - No
Inner and/or Outer Perimeter:	Platform track #2		Power De-energized: De-energized Time:	N - No		

Document 1 - MTPD Hot Wash Summary, Page 1 of 4.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

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OSC Relinquished Scene Command to Name	Medical Attention Required/Requested:	N - No
Dept:		
	CID Response: N - No	

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Metro Transit Police Department Hot Wash Summary

WMATA and EXTERNAL ON-SCENE PERSONNEL						
Name	Department/Office	Title/Role				
		scene security				
		Operations				
		scene security				
		OSC Assistant				
		К9				
		EOD				
		OEP				

Document 2 - MTPD Hot Wash Summary, Page 2 of 4.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

Drafted By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Page 13

Approved By: SAFE 71 – 11/02/2023

MTPD-OSP-TMPL-009-00

Metro Transit Police Department Hot Wash Summary

REQUESTS				
*Radio Run Requested (Yes/No):	N - No			
If "Yes," location where tape is stored:				
*Digital Video Evidence Unit (DVEU) Video Requested (Yes/No):	N - No			
If "Yes," location where video is stored:				

OBSERVATIONS

Officer received a call for a person who threw a package (black and white box) onto an unknown train car number at Gallery Place. Once the individual threw the package onto the train car, the individual fled the station utilizing the 7th and F St elevators. It was determined that the affected train was train #301 in the direction of Huntington Metro. The train stopped at National Airport on track #2 and was offloaded of passengers. The passengers were sent to the platform on track #1 side and trains in the direction of Huntington/Springfield utilized track #3 with all passengers traffic on 1 platform. arrived on scene and swept the area of the command post (South side Kiosk) and continued to sweep train #301 and the platform for any other issues. gave the all clear of secondary devices and EOD arrived on scene and evaluated the packages. It was determined the safest way to X-ray the package was for EOD 5 to suit up and manually perform an Xray. When EOD was ready to approach the package, train traffic was momentarily stopped on tracks #1 and #3 for safety and patrons were cleared of the platform. EOD ■ Xrayed the package and determined that the package was an empty box which was thrown onto the train. OEP arrived on scene to the command post and the scene was turned over to OEP who worked with Rail to return the rails back to normal train traffic. During the incident, rail experienced minimal delays due to having 3 tracks available.

Issues noted in the hot wash:

Rail sending the rail supervisor onto the platform to clear the train when it was already cleared by MTPD.

Document 3 - MTPD Hot Wash Summary, Page 3 of 4.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

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Radio issues hindered the communications between officers on scene and the MAC.
On Scene Commander's Title, Printed Name, and Signature/Date
0.000000 4.50.00.00
9/3/2023 4:52:00 PM
Watch Commander's Title, Printed Name and Signature/Date
Patrol Operations Bureau Commander's Printed Name and Signature/Date
Office of Emergency Management Director's Printed Name and Signature/Date
MTPD-OSP-TMPL-009-00

Document 4 - MTPD Hot Wash Summary, Page 4 of 4.

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

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Appendix B - RTRA Supervisor's Report

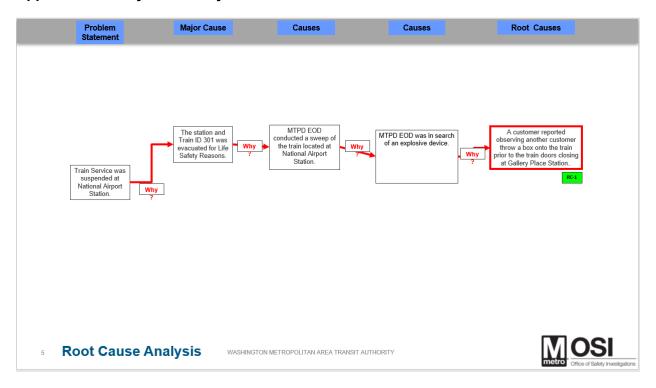
M	R	RTRA Supervisors' Report				DEPARTM	DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS-RAIL SERVICE		
metro		SHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY				Offi	Office of Rail Transportation		
Date 0/03/2023		dent Time:) PM	Incident Location (Station Mezzanine#) REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT		f)	Track/Mezzanine# Track 2			
quipment Numl RAIN ID 301	ber (Train ID &	Car Numbers;	Escalato	r/Elevator #, Roo	m #)				
WMATA Personr MTPD BADGE	nel Involved		Emplo	yee #	Rule Violation?		Home Division Alexandria Division	Post Incident	
n/a									
lame /a			Addres	SS				Injury?	
lame /a			Addres	SS				Injury?	
va Arrival Time	T	Unit Number	Person	n In Charge		Remarks			
VAILABLE TO	, 2023 I WAS (TRACK 2 DUE	CALLED TO RES	ANCES.	I REMAINED ON	THE MEZZANIE ARE	A ASISTING TR	SPICIOUS PACAGE , AO ANSIT OFFICER AND ISPATCHED TO AX YAR		
Supervisor Subn	nitting Report	(include payrol	l#)	Date SEPT. 3, 2023	Repor		Date	ina.	
RTRA Superv	isor's Repo	rt		1			09/22 Pa	723 age 2 of 2	
Details(continue	d from front)								
09/10			REPORT N	MUST BE FAXED TO	ROCC 301-618-1012 a	t and of tour			

Document 5 – RTRA Supervisor's Report, Page 1 of 1

Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons E23616

Drafted By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023 Page 16
Reviewed By: SAFE 707 – 10/31/2023
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Appendix C – Why-Tree Analysis



Incident Date: 09/03/2023 Time: 16:39 hours Final Report – Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons

E23616

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