

WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2025

Location: This meeting was conducted as a publicly streamed video conference. The video recording of the meeting is available at [Recording available on YouTube](#) – January 28, 2025. Commissioner questions and comments are captured in the video recording.

MINUTES

Order of Events	Items
Attendance	Commissioners present: Chair Christopher Hart, Secretary-Treasurer Debra Farrar-Dyke, and Commissioners Rouse, Conklin, Robinson, and Higgins. Commissioner Higgins is a non-voting member.
1.	Call to Order. Hart. Hart called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. WMSC General Counsel Silbaugh called the roll, and a quorum was achieved.
2.	Safety Message. Darrell Braxton, Program Specialist, Operations. Braxton highlighted some of the safety tips to stay safe during wintertime inclement weather. Dress in layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing, with a water repellent outer layer. Protect hands and feet from the cold and wear a hat that covers your ears. Stay hydrated and do only the work outside that is necessary. Signs of hypothermia are uncontrollable shivering, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, and apparent exhaustion. If the body temperature drops below 95 degrees, seek medical care immediately.
3.	Approval of the minutes of the December 10, 2024 Public Meeting. Hart. Farrar-Dyke sought comments on the proposed minutes. Hearing none, she moved for approval of the minutes of the December 10, 2024 Public Meeting. The minutes of the December 10, 2024 Public Meeting were approved unanimously.
4.	Public Comments. Hart. Hart invited comments from members of the public who had joined the webinar audience and who identified themselves as speakers. No members of the public offered comments. Chair Hart

	<p>also reminded viewers that comments may be provided to the WMSC website, through social media, or by email.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Chair’s Remarks. Hart.</p> <p>Hart forecasted the updates on the WMSC’s ongoing safety oversight activities and the actions that are taken to ensure that Metrorail upholds its safety commitments and strives to continuously improve the safety of its system. He also reported on the Commissioners’ resolution of Metrorail’s petition for reconsideration sent to the Commissioners. Metrorail submitted a petition for reconsideration of the WMSC’s September 27 Order on Future Roadway Worker Protection Program Revisions and on December 16, Hart transmitted the Commissioners’ decision denying the petition. The Commissioners found the facts and issues Metrorail raised did not support rescinding the Order, and as reflected in the Program Standard, Metrorail did not propose any alternative actions that addressed the concerns raised by the WMSC in the RWP Order. He emphasized that now that the petition process has concluded, his fellow Commissioners and he prefer to see Metrorail and the WMSC working together to identify and implement changes to the Roadway Worker Protection program because the WMSC Commissioners have voiced their concern over Roadway Worker issues for some time. By working together, our agencies can advance our shared goal of a safer Metrorail particularly for employees, but also for passengers and first responders.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>CEO’s Remarks. David Mayer, Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>Mayer started with an update on the WMSC’s effort to obtain responses to the initial document requests that were issued in April 2024 in support of the Fitness for Duty and Occupational Health Programs Audit. Because Metrorail refuses to provide any documents related to worker safety, the WMSC filed a petition in the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia. In mid-December, the assigned District Court Judge referred the case to a Magistrate Judge. The WMSC is prepared to respond to any requests of the Magistrate Judge. We are also prepared to conduct the Audit, so we look forward to this matter being resolved. Mayer also previewed that during the meeting, staff will provide updates on overseeing Metrorail corrective action plan implementation, ongoing audits into emergency management and rail operations and control, and continued vigilance following the WMSC’s concurrence to start ATO at design speeds on the Red Line. Last, the investigations team will give an update on its ongoing investigative activities as well as seek the Commissioners adoption of several investigations into evacuations for life safety, improper roadway worker protection and red signal overruns.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Audits. Davis Rajtik, Deputy Chief Operations Officer and Director, Audits and Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>Rajtik reiterated Mayer’s report that the deadline for the production of documents has passed but the WMSC has not received the majority of the documents needed to begin the Fitness for Duty and Occupational Health Programs Audit. Thus, the WMSC is not able to begin its targeted assessment of compliance with worker safety standards. For ongoing audits, the Emergency</p>

	<p>Management and Fire Life Safety Program audit is in its last review phase, which includes consideration of the comments Metrorail provided. In October and November, the WMSC conducted approximately 60 interviews and on-site observations for the Control Center and Rail Operations audit. WMATA also provided additional documents in December and January for this audit. The exit conference for this audit was held on January 14, 2025, and the WMSC has begun drafting the audit report. Last, following the WMSC notification letter and initial document requests for the Elevators and Escalators audit, Metrorail responded on December 5, 2024. After reviewing these responses, interviews and observations will be scheduled.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). Ashley Rhodes, Program Manager for Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>Rhodes reported that five CAPs have been closed since the December 10, 2024 public meeting. There are 92 open CAPs, which include one remaining CAPs stemming from the Roadway Worker Protection Audit. Metrorail has submitted 44 new deliverables for the open CAPs between the December and January meetings. Before discussing the closed CAPs, Rhodes provided a status on the WMSC’s four notices of non-compliance. These notices were necessary because Metrorail refused to follow the requirements of the WMSC Compact and the WMSC Program Standard in preparing acceptable CAPs to correct hazards contained in recent WMSC audit findings. Metrorail has not responded to the Notices for C-0255 or C-0272. Metrorail has interacted with the WMSC on the other two Notices, for C-0072 and C-0146; the WMSC is ready to continue progressing these CAPs. Turning to the five closed CAPs: CAP C-0070 developed from a finding from an investigation of a train pull apart, where the incident scene has been changed following the incident. Metrorail updated its internal investigations policy and created training materials on the updated policy. Next, CAP C-0157 developed from a finding in the 2021 High Voltage Traction Power Audit, which found “the latest as-built schematics are not available in each traction power facility as required by the TRPM-1000 and Metrorail preventive maintenance instructions.” This failure was found again in the 2024 Power Audit. Metrorail performed a gap analysis to determine what traction power facilities were lacking proper schematics, then updated those locations. C-0171 developed from a finding in the 2022 Emergency Management and Fire Life Safety Programs Audit, noting that dirt covered the emergency equipment in the station medical cabinets. Testing of the dirt led to the discovery of lead in the Metrorail system. After March 2024, Metrorail refuses to provide data to the WMSC related to the lead hazard. Nonetheless, Metrorail completed the specific task of cleaning the medical supply cabinets. C-0218 stems from a finding in the 2022 Audit of Communications Systems, which found that Metrorail hazard logs were not kept or maintained. Metrorail developed a standard operating procedure to address the identification, documentation, and mitigation of hazards. Staff completed training on this SOP, and a hazard tracking system was launched. Last, C-0275 was developed from a finding in the 2024 Revenue Vehicles Audit, that Metrorail did not follow the industry standard electrostatic discharge protection practices for railcar components. To correct this failure, Metrorail created an instruction document and trained staff, and purchased the materials needed to execute the electrostatic discharge procedures.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Safety Certification Status Report. Paul Smith, Director, System Engineering.</p> <p>Smith focused on the in-depth review of Metrorail’s use of automatic train operations and the change to the maximum allowable speed. On December 9, 2024, the WMSC concurred with the</p>

	<p>use of both on the Red Line in revenue service. The WMSC continues its oversight of the implementation of ATO and return to design speed, particularly the increase in station overruns when trains are operating in ATO. Since December 15, 2024, Metrorail has had 133 station overruns with trains operating in ATO, including 40 that overran the 8-car marker by a train car length or more. The train does not service the station that is overrun, which could create safety issues if there is an Advanced Mobile Flagger that has instructions about a work crew ahead, or if the doors open off of the platform. Metrorail committed to sharing its data analyses of these overruns with the WMSC, and there is a weekly meeting with Metrorail’s ATO Project Team. Mr. Quigley joined the presentation to discuss the train operator interviews conducted after an overrun in ATO. The investigations team also requests Vehicle Monitoring data. Mr. Smith reported that one pattern the data identified is the use of the “Station Stop Cancel” button as the train is entering the station, which causes the train to lose its Station Stopping Profile. Metrorail issued a directive to address the incorrect use of this button. Metrorail also re-evaluated its severe weather procedures because some overruns occurred during snow or rain. The WMSC continues to engage with Metrorail to ensure that it uses Systems Engineering, as well as a Safety Management System data-driven approach to fully investigate and categorize each station overrun and find the proper mitigations for each one of these events. The WMWSC stated to Metrorail that in order for the remainder of the Metrorail system to be assessed for ATO concurrence by the WMSC, the WMSC requires evidence of comprehensive data gathering, and a disciplined analysis of that data leading to permanent mitigations to prevent Station Overruns in ATO on the Red Line.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Safety Event Investigations. Adam Quigley, Manager, Safety Investigations and Natalie Quiroz, Investigations Analyst.</p> <p>The reports referenced below may be found at the following link: https://wmsc.gov/oversight/reports/.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. W-0344 Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Eastern Market Station – February 15, 2024 2. W-0355 Improper Roadway Worker Protection at Anacostia Station – May 7, 2024 3. W-0356 Red Signal Overrun at Brentwood Rail Yard – April 9, 2024 4. W-0357 Red Signal Overrun at Shady Grove Rail Yard – May 12, 2024 5. W-0358 Derailment at the West Falls Church Rail Yard Lead – July 1, 2023 6. W-0359 Improper Door Operations at Greenbelt Station – June 29, 2024 <p>Commissioners moved to adopt the six reports. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Adjournment. Hart adjourned the meeting at 1:59 p.m.</p>