



WMSC Inspection Report 20250521

ISSUED 5/27/2025

Inspection Details

Title: Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) - Standdown inspection

Location: Branch Avenue and Brentwood Divisions

Date of Inspection: 5/21/25

Time of Inspection: 10:00pm to 11:00pm

Unannounced

Risk-Based (RWP Standdown prompted by near misses on 5/13/25 and 5/20/25)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection

Hazard Rating: 1D

Overview

On May 21, 2025, the WMSC conducted a risk-based inspection on the Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) Standdown at Metrorail's Brentwood and Branch Ave Divisions. Metrorail developed this urgent safety training, presented via a safety standdown, after two recent RWP near misses. Metrorail's standdown safety training was an instructional tool to communicate the safety concerns from the two recent safety incidents. These two near misses were as follows:

1. On Tuesday, May 13, 2025, three trains came across a Track department mobile work crew near Bethesda Station, without prior warning being provided to the train operators, due to the absence of an Advanced Flagger. The Roadway-Worker-in-Charge (RWIC) began the mobile work crew's inspection without the RWIC verifying their Advanced Flagger was in place. All three trains passed the mobile work crew at high speed. The crew was forced to move to a place of safety. Multiple roadway workers and train operators did not immediately report the incident. Upon encountering this mobile work crew, one of these train operators notified the rail operations control center regarding the presence of a mobile roadway work crew without an advanced mobile flagger.
2. On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, a Metrorail Power department crew was granted foul time to conduct work on Track 1 near Medical Center station. However, one of the crew then



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entered Track 2 without permission and without protection and was nearly struck by a train traveling at speed.

On May 21, 2025, Metrorail informed the WMSC that a safety training standdown would be conducted overnight, on May 21, 2025, at all Metrorail divisions. Metrorail's standdown focused on three areas of roadway worker protection to educate roadway workers in response to the near misses:

1. An overview of the purpose of Roadway Worker Protection at WMATA
2. The importance of establishing Roadway Worker Protection before accessing the roadway
3. The importance of following the rules to protect yourself and others

According to the Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR), the relevant RWP rules and procedures that were violated during these near misses are:

RWP Rules violated	May 13, Bethesda, Improper RWP near miss	May 20, Medical Center, Improper RWP near miss
Advanced Mobile Flagger 17.22.4.1 Before accessing the roadway, the Roadway Worker in Charge shall ensure the Advanced Flagger is properly equipped and positioned on the correct track at the 8-car marker or end gate at the next passenger station in advance of the Mobile Work Crew.	X	
MOR 8.10.4 After departing the passenger station, the Rail Vehicle Operator must not exceed 35 mph until reaching the next passenger station, staying alert for multiple work crews.	X	
Cardinal Rule 2 Personnel shall expect, and be vigilant of, rail vehicle movement in all directions, at all times.		X
Cardinal Rule 5 There shall be no fouling of the WMATA's roadway unless it is necessary to perform your job.		X
17.8.2.4 Roadway Worker in Charge (RWIC) (d) Assigns qualified Advanced Mobile Flagger(s) and Watchman/Lookout(s) before any Roadway Workers enter the roadway and ensures they are positioned appropriately to provide Ample Time/Warning for workers to	X	X



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RWP Rules violated	May 13, Bethesda, Improper RWP near miss	May 20, Medical Center, Improper RWP near miss
move to a place of safety before a rail vehicle can reach their location		
17.8.2.4 RWIC (h) Must receive permission from the Rail Traffic Controller before entering the roadway and will not enter the roadway until permission is granted by the Rail Traffic Controller.		X

The purpose of the WMSC inspection was to verify the efficacy of the standdown. In preparation for the inspection, the WMSC Inspectors reviewed the notifications received by WMSC for the two Improper RWP/near miss incidents and Safety Alert (SA 25-05-D Version #1 Issue Date: 5/21/2025) Metrorail provided to the WMSC. SA 25-5-D was the reference material provided to the attendees at each safety standdown. WMSC Inspectors attended the Branch Avenue and Brentwood Division standdowns.

These two improper RWP safety events are currently under investigation by Metrorail and the WMSC. Once investigative activities are completed, an investigation report will be prepared for each event. Each investigation report will be presented to the WMSC Board for review and adoption at a future public meeting.

After concluding the inspection, the WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with the WMATA instructors in accordance with Program Standard Section 6.F.1.

Defects and Corrective Actions

WMSC Inspections identify safety issues that may be classified as defects, findings, or recommendations. Findings and recommendations are defined by Program Standard Section 5.E.2 and 5.E.3, respectively. Ordinarily, issues identified in a WMSC inspection report are classified as defects. Defects are specific safety issues of non-conformance/non-compliance that are identified and that require remedial action.

This inspection did not identify any findings or recommendations and therefore does not require a WMSC Corrective Action Plan in accordance with Program Standard Section 5.E.4.



Defect Observations and Determinations

Inspectors confirmed the attendance at the Branch Avenue Division consisted of approximately twenty-five (25) track personnel. Metrorail was using a QR code to confirm attendance at the Branch Avenue Division. The attendance at the Brentwood Division location consisted of five (5) low voltage employees and eight (8) high voltage employees. Attendance at the Brentwood Division standdown was confirmed by signature.

Inspectors confirmed the standdown included a detailed discussion of the critical points that all roadway workers should implement to ensure their safety while working on the roadway. Furthermore, the inspectors confirmed, that key learning objectives were met, by observing Metrorail's use of three final questions after the training to gauge audience understanding of the standdown. The questions are:

1. What is the purpose of the RWP?
2. What are the forms of RWP?
3. Who is responsible for reporting an incident?

The WMSC Inspectors noted the instructors closed the training by reminding the workers that complacency should be avoided and to always take RWP seriously. The instructors reinforced the need to use the Metrorail safety reporting hotline.

The WMSC will continue to perform roadway worker protection inspections and work collaboratively with Metrorail to continually improve the RWP program.

This inspection found no defects.

Next Steps

Please respond **by Friday, May 30, 2025**, to acknowledge receipt.