

## WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

**Date:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025

**Location:** This meeting was conducted as a publicly streamed video conference. The video recording of the meeting is available at [WMSC Public Meeting of the Commissioners June 10, 2025](#). Commissioner questions and comments are captured in the video recording.

---

### MINUTES

Order of Events	Items
Attendance	Commissioners present: Chair Christopher Hart, Vice Chair Robert Lauby, Secretary-Treasurer Debra Farrar-Dyke, and Commissioners Bobb, Conklin, Robinson (joined at 1:13 p.m.) and Higgins. Commissioner Robinson was a voting member for this meeting.
1.	<p><b>Call to Order.</b> Hart.</p> <p>Hart called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. WMSC General Counsel Silbaugh called the roll, and a quorum was achieved throughout the meeting.</p>
2.	<p><b>Safety Message.</b> Darrell Braxton, Program Specialist, Operations.</p> <p>Braxton shared that June is National Safety Month, and he focused on fatigue management. Fatigue is bad for health reasons and hazardous at workplaces. According to the National Safety Council resources, studies have shown that tired employees may be responsible for up to 13% of workplace injuries. Employers should strive to create schedules and practices that provide employees with time to get proper rest and have a solution if an employee reports that they are too fatigued to do their job safely. Employees should plan personal time wisely to get 7 – 9 hours of sleep every day and report to work fit for duty. We all should watch out for co-workers who seem too tired to work and tell their supervisor if co-workers are too tired to perform their job safely. This shared responsibility will reduce fatigue in the workplace.</p>
3.	<p><b>Approval of the minutes of the May 13, 2025 Public Meeting.</b> Farrar-Dyke.</p> <p>Farrar-Dyke sought comments on the proposed minutes. Hearing none, she moved for approval of the minutes of the May 13, 2025 Public Meeting. The minutes of the May 13, 2025 Public Meeting were approved unanimously.</p>

4.	<p><b>Public Comments.</b> Hart.</p> <p>Hart invited comments from members of the public who joined the webinar audience and who identified themselves as speakers. No members of the public offered comments. Chair Hart also reminded viewers that comments may be provided to the WMSC website, through social media, or by email.</p>
5.	<p><b>Chair’s Remarks.</b> Hart.</p> <p>Hart began his comments with an overview of the meeting, which included updates on the WMSC’s ongoing safety oversight activities and the actions that are taken daily to ensure that Metrorail upholds its safety commitments and strives to continuously improve the safety of its system. He acknowledged the ongoing communication and coordination that the WMSC staff conducts with Metrorail at all levels of both organizations. He appreciates the WMSC staff’s effective oversight work, and thanked Metrorail for its efforts to comply with its safety requirements that provide for the safety of Metrorail riders and workers.</p> <p>He forecast that in the meeting, Commissioners will vote on a resolution authorizing the procurement of business insurance and vote to approve and distribute the 2024 Annual Safety Report and Annual Report of Operations.</p>
6.	<p><b>CEO’s Remarks.</b> David Mayer, Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>Mayer updated the safety certification review for use of Automatic Train Operations in passenger service on the Yellow/Green Lines. He summarized the continued engagement with Metrorail and its demonstrated compliance with the mitigations necessary to safely activate ATO on these lines, which led to the WMSC concurrence on May 20, 2025. He forecasted that Mr. Smith will provide more details during his remarks on safety certification projects. Mayer then turned to the requirements for the approval of WMATA’s RWP Program. The WMSC team and Metrorail are currently implementing their distinct responsibilities to meet the requirements in the September 2024 WMSC order on Metrorail’s Roadway worker protection program and the Federal Transit Administration Rail Transit Roadway Worker Protection regulation. Metrorail’s responsibility is to assemble a compliant roadway worker protection program complete with a training and qualification program and a risk-based rules compliance program and to submit it to the WMSC. The WMSC’s responsibility is to review it for compliance with the WMSC’s RWP Order as well as FTA’s requirements and to provide approval of the program. Metrorail held a Roadway Worker Protection Program workshop with WMSC on June 2. In April we received an initial Roadway Worker Protection Program package for our review and approval. The WMSC responded to Metrorail noting that there were several components missing in the submittal that would prevent us conducting our review. Subsequently the WMSC received a revised RWP Program package on May 23 from Metrorail that is being evaluated. There is work to do to meet the WMSC and FTA RWP requirements, but we are optimistic that we will provide our approval in the coming months. Finally, as Chair Hart mentioned, in today’s meeting the commissioners will consider and vote on two items: the adoption of the WMSC annual report and an authorization to procure business insurance. The Annual Report is required by the WMSC Compact, and it provides an overview of Metrorail safety and the WMSC’s operations in 2024.</p>

7.	<p><b>Audits.</b> John O'Donnell, Program Specialist, Audits and Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>O'Donnell reported that the WMSC is completing its second triennial cycle of safety audits and has begun the third triennial cycle. He reported that each audit is aimed at examining Metrorail's compliance with its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and associated safety commitments and requirements that are in place to maintain the necessary level of safety. There are several WMSC triennial audits at varying stages of completion. The Control Center and Rail Operations audit, and the Elevator and Escalators program draft reports are currently in the review stage. A draft of each report will be sent to Metrorail for review and Metrorail will then have 30 days to provide comments. Once comments are received, they will be carefully considered prior to issuance of the final report. The third audit is of Metrorail's Communication Systems. The WMSC held an exit conference with Metrorail on June 5, 2025. Preliminary findings and recommendations were presented to Metrorail. Metrorail has until this Friday, June 13th, to provide additional information for consideration. The third active audit concerns Metrorail's Track and Structures. This is the first audit in the WMSC's third triennial audit cycle. Our notification of this audit and our initial document requests were sent to Metrorail on April 30, and documents were subsequently received on May 30th. Onsite observations and interviews will be done in June and July.</p>
8.	<p><b>Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).</b> John O'Donnell, Program Specialist, Audits and Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>O'Donnell reported that five CAPs have been closed since the May 13, 2025 public meeting. There are 78 open CAPs, and three in development from the Emergency Management Fire Life Safety Audit. Metrorail submitted 24 new deliverables for the open CAPs since the May meeting, and O'Donnell provided examples of the deliverables. Next, he provided more detail about the five closed CAPs: C-0167 addressed a finding from the 2022 Audit of Emergency Management and Fire Life Safety Programs, which identified that Metrorail did not have clearly defined and understood authorities of the Fire Marshal and other fire prevention roles. Metrorail developed a new Fire Life Safety Inspection procedure and other related procedures, including a continuity of operations plan should the Fire Marshal be unavailable. CAP C-0170 also addressed a finding from the 2022 Audit of Emergency Management and Fire Life Safety Programs, which identified that Metrorail does not routinely conduct hazard assessments to evaluate fire and life safety and emergency management matters. To address this CAP, Metrorail implemented processes that include updates to its Safety Inspection procedure, creation of a responsibility Matrix to better define and assign maintenance and inspection of fire and life safety assets and created a new dashboard for tracking fire life safety inspections, assets and issues identified. CAP C-0221 stems from a finding in the 2022 Audit of Metrorail's Communication System. The finding stated, "Metrorail lacks the safety assurance and safety promotion activities required to ensure that only current and calibrated radios are in use as required by Metrorail instruction and procedure, creating a risk that this safety equipment will not properly function when needed." In response, Metrorail developed an agencywide strategy to promote handheld radio policy and procedures awareness and enforcement that communicated the requirement to surrender noncompliant radios. Training was developed to educate personnel on the awareness, functionality, safety benefits, configuration, and calibration of WMATA-issued radios. In addition, Metrorail removed all analog radios and only use the newer digital radios going forward as original equipment manufacturer requirements do</p>

	<p>not specify regular calibration for the digital. The WMSC conducted several field observations related to this CAP to ensure that older radios were properly removed from use. Next, C-0238 addresses a finding in the 2023 Audit of Metrorail's Structures Program. This finding states "Metrorail is not carrying out the safety risk management, safety assurance, and safety promotion for the structures program required by Metrorail's Agency Safety Plan to ensure safe and effective structural engineering, maintenance, and operation." Metrorail created a new Safety Risk Management Procedure outlining the process to properly identify, document, and mitigate hazards in accordance with WMATA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan. Also, Metrorail developed and implemented training on its Safety Management System, covering hazard identification, hazard reporting, and the Safety Risk Management process. Training records indicate over 95% of active Structures personnel were trained. Last, C-0250 stems from a recommendation in the 2023 Roadway Maintenance Machines Audit. This finding sought effective interdepartmental coordination of safety data, technology, and contracts. Metrorail established the Rail Safety Oversight Coordination Meeting as a forum to engage Rail Infrastructure and Operations on potential safety concerns. Metrorail's SMS processes include Safety Risk Coordinators for Infrastructure and Operations departments that meet and discuss hazards and risks seen by their department. Metrorail also created a program for Safety Risk Advisors which are personnel from administrative departments that champion safety awareness and reporting.</p>
9.	<p><b>Safety Certification Status Report.</b> Paul Smith, Director, System Engineering.</p> <p>Smith started with an overview of the WMSC's oversight of Metrorail's activation of ATO. The WMSC's April 3 communication to Metrorail provided the key reasons the WMSC could not concur with further expansion of ATO to the Green and Yellow lines and specified that Metrorail should perform a detailed analysis of station overrun causes followed by measures to increase station stopping accuracy and decrease station overruns. The WMSC required WMATA to address station overruns because Metrorail had been unable to determine if the overruns are an isolated or systemic problem. We explained that the increased number of station overruns seen on the Red line in ATO in contrast to Manual mode, increases the possibility of roadway workers or equipment being struck by a train. On April 28, the WMSC team and Metrorail team met at an ATO workshop, the fourth in the series of ATO workshops over the course of the past 2 years. These workshops have been in addition to our regular frequent interactions with the Metrorail ATO team. During this workshop, Metrorail shared new information on its processes to understand station overrun causes. Next, following the safety management approach outlined in Metrorail's Agency Safety Plan, the WMSC identified safety concerns based on the safety data from the station overruns since Red Line ATO was activated and requested additional information and assurances on ATO in a May 5 email to Metrorail. These assurances included specifying that the ATO governance committee be formalized into action to review every overrun, and that the committee can recommend and implement changes to enhance Metrorail operational safety. The WMSC specified that Metrorail provides a schedule of implementation for the 7000 series railcar antenna normalization. Metrorail implemented the antenna normalization in 2024 to prevent station overruns of 7000 series rail cars. However, in mid-April, Metrorail learned and communicated to the WMSC that this update was compromised. As a result, the WMSC asked for a schedule of when the corrective steps will be completed and asked for additional roadway worker protection until such corrective steps were in place for 7000 series railcars. The WMSC also specified that Metrorail conduct rules compliance checks on rail vehicle operators, roadway workers, and rail traffic control personnel. The WMSC placed particular</p>

	<p>emphasis on compliance monitoring related to Advanced Mobile Flaggers, Watchman/Lookouts, and Roadway Workers in Charge. Next, Metrorail learned early on in Red Line ATO operations that train operators were incorrectly using the cancel station stop button, which led to an increase in station overruns. Therefore, the WMSC specified that Metrorail provide an implementation schedule for the disabling of the Cancel Station Stop button on all railcars. The WMSC also reminded Metrorail the station stopping accuracy percentage of 99%, Metrorail's stated goal, should serve only as an ATO station stopping performance baseline since it did not represent a safety threshold. Finally, the WMSC specified that prior to final concurrence for the entire system, Metrorail is required to produce a detailed technical report on station overrun events analyses. On May 13, Metrorail provided responses to these specifications and included additional information it learned following the last ATO workshop, including that key parts of the software changes in the normalization procedure for the 7000 series were not perishable. This led to the WMSC no longer calling for additional redundant roadway worker protection. Metrorail provided documentation formalizing the ATO governance committee that would be conducting the detailed analysis of station overruns on each of the lines with ATO throughout the rollout of ATO. The Metrorail response included schedules for completing the work on the remaining steps in the normalization procedure as well as completing the disabling of the cancel station stop buttons on the remaining fleet of cars. Last, Metrorail provided the processes that will be used to conduct rules compliance checks. Through these measures, the WMSC found WMATA substantially complied with safety certification requirements. This led to the WMSC's concurrence for activating ATO on Green and Yellow Lines on May 20. The concurrence letter included notice of follow-up oversight and Metrorail reporting obligations as ATO continues in use. This follow up information provides the necessary safety information for the WMSC to evaluate further expansion of use of ATO on Blue, Orange, and Silver lines. Unlike on the Red line, with 40 station overruns in the first 10 days, the Green and Yellow line ATO operations have had 25 station overruns. Some of the lessons learned during the activation of ATO in passenger service on the Red line have been applied to the activation of ATO on the Green and Yellow lines and seem to have had a positive impact. Additionally, the WMSC is continuing to keep our eyes on Red line ATO station overruns and continues to work with Metrorail as it addresses the overruns. Concerning the safety certification process for the 8000 series railcars, Metrorail sent several preliminary engineering materials surrounding its 8000 series rail car safety certification. The WMSC team is reviewing these materials. We will communicate our feedback to Metrorail once that review is complete.</p>
10.	<p><b>Safety Event Investigations.</b> Adam Quigley, Manager, Safety Investigations and Natalie Quiroz, Investigations Analyst.</p> <p>The reports referenced below may be found at the following link:  <a href="https://wmsc.gov/oversight/reports/">https://wmsc.gov/oversight/reports/</a>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. W-0377 Improper Roadway Worker Protection at Southern Avenue Station – August 26, 2024</li> <li>2. W-0378 Improper Door Operation at Glenmont Station – May 9, 2024</li> <li>3. W-0379 Improper Door Operation at Silver Spring Station – September 1, 2024</li> <li>4. W-0380 Improper Door Operation at Braddock Road Station – September 3, 2024</li> <li>5. W-0381 Improper Door Operation at Innovation Station – September 23, 2024</li> <li>6. W-0382 Improper Door Operation at Silver Spring Station – September 24, 2024</li> </ol>

	<p>7. W-0383 Collision at Landover Station – August 25, 2024</p> <p>Commissioners moved to adopt the seven reports. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
11.	<p><b>Resolutions and other actions.</b> Hart and Ange, Chief Financial Officer.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Commissioners reviewed and considered the draft 2024 Annual Safety Report and Annual Report of Operations. Farrar-Dyke moved for the approval and publication of the 2024 Annual Reports and the motion passed unanimously.</li> <li>2. Ange introduced a procurement-related resolution. Under the WMSC procurement processes, the Commissioners must authorize the CEO to award procurements when the procurement is expected to exceed \$50,000 in value. A procurement is in development for business operations insurance, which is expected to exceed the authorization threshold.</li> </ol> <p>The Commissioners moved for the adoption of this procurement-related resolution. The motion passed unanimously</p>
12.	<p><b>Adjournment.</b> Hart adjourned the public portion of the meeting at 2:16 p.m.</p>
13.	<p><b>Closed Meeting.</b> Hart.</p> <p>Hart moved for the Commissioners to meet in a closed meeting to discuss issues that related solely to the internal personnel rules and policies of the agency. General Counsel Silbaugh agreed that pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552b(c)(2) and (d)(1), discussing internal personnel rules and policies of the agency was an exception to the open meetings requirements and moving into a closed meeting required a majority vote of the Commissioners. The motion passed unanimously. The Commissioners recessed the meeting on June 10 and reconvened on July 7 and July 22 following the same rules and procedures. The meeting adjourned on July 22.</p>