



# WMSC Inspection Report 20260302B

ISSUED 3/6/2026

## Inspection Details

Title: Red (A) Line Roadway Worker Protection Inspection

Location: Bethesda (A09) to Medical Center (A10)

Date of Inspection: March 3, 2026

Time of Inspection: 11:00pm to 5:00am

Announced (via email to Metrorail Safety Specialist on 3/2/2026 at 10:47pm)

Risk-Based (Audit, Data Review, Inspection, Corrective Action Plan)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection

Hazard Rating: 1B

## Overview

On March 3, 2026, WMSC Inspectors carried out a roadway worker protection (RWP) inspection between Bethesda (A09) and Medical Center (A10) stations. The goal of this inspection was to evaluate Metrorail's adherence to roadway worker protection requirements (primarily stated in Metrorail Operating Rulebook section 17).

This is a risk-based inspection based on an urgent hazard and finding identified during the WMSC's Track, Structures, and Roadway Worker Protection Audit. The finding and details of that urgent hazard may be found [here](#). In brief, the WMSC issued a finding that Metrorail is not following its written process to ensure and document that its roadway workers in charge have demonstrated the knowledge and skills required to do their job safely. The WMSC approved corrective action plan C-0310 on September 30, 2025. To address this finding, Metrorail re-trained and re-qualified all 192 personnel.

These inspections also serve to verify that the safety condition created by inadequately qualified roadway workers in charge is not creating additional hazards and to ensure that roadway worker protection rules are being adhered to. The WMSC has also identified RWP defects in 26% of all risk-based inspections.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Approximately 26% of all risk-based inspections identified roadway worker protection defects.



Additionally, comparing 2024 safety event data to 2025, the data showed roadway worker protection (RWP) safety events were up more than 25% in 2025 than in 2024.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, the WMSC continues to prioritize roadway worker protection inspections.

After concluding the inspection, WMSC inspectors conducted a debrief at Bethesda Station (A09) with Metrorail’s Safety Department Inspector, 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

### Defect 1 (Temporarily Mitigated)

WMSC Inspectors discovered a grinder aboard flatcar F508 that had the safety guard removed. Metrorail Standard Number: 4443-2-01/00, Machine Guarding Program (Rev. 0, November 1, 2024), section 6.7.1.1 states “If tools are designed with a guard, the guard shall not be removed or modified.” The Metrorail safety inspector and work crew were notified of this defect to prevent use during that evening’s work, but additional steps are needed in order to mitigate the risk of future use.

### Hazard Rating: 2C

### Photos:



Photo 1: Grinder with the safety guard removed.

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<sup>2</sup> The WMSC Program Standard requires that WMATA report certain safety events to the WMSC comprised of three categories: accidents (also reportable to the Federal Transit Administration), incidents, and occurrences. Occurrence code O-23: Improper Roadway Worker Protection was up 26.47% in 2025 compared to 2024. (Source WMSC Year-Over-Year Safety Event dashboard.)



## Defect 2

WMSC Inspectors identified two fire extinguishers aboard flatcar F508 that were undercharged (as indicated on gauge in photos 2 and 3). In accordance with NFPA 10, Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers, 2026 edition, Chapter 7, Inspection, Maintenance, and Recharging, requires immediate corrective action to be taken whenever a portable fire extinguisher fails an inspection. The Metrorail safety inspector and working crew were notified of the defect to ensure mitigation and to advise use of other extinguishers aboard the vehicles in the event of a fire.

### Hazard Rating: 1D

#### Photos:



Photo 2 (left) and 3 (right): Gauge indicating undercharged fire extinguishers.

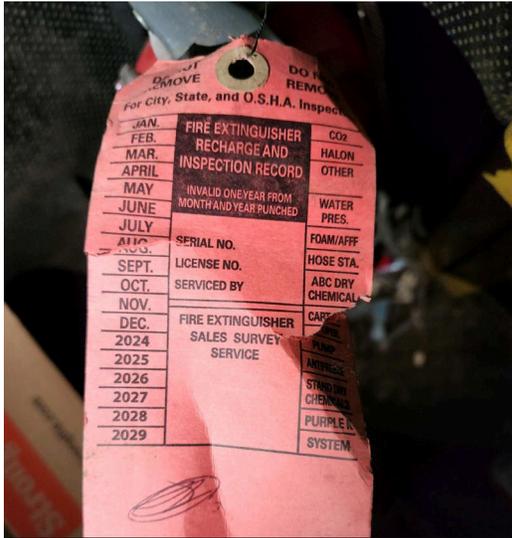
## Defect 3

WMSC Inspectors identified fire extinguishers aboard Prime Mover (PM) 29 and flatcar F508 that had missing or incomplete charge inspection records attached to the devices. In accordance with NFPA 10, Standard for Portable Fire Extinguishers, 2026 edition, Chapter 7, Inspection, Maintenance, and Recharging, requires immediate corrective action to be taken whenever a portable fire extinguisher fails an inspection. The Metrorail safety inspector was notified of the defect to pursue mitigation.

### Hazard Rating: 3C



Photos:



Extinguisher on F508 missing certifying information.



Extinguisher on PM29 missing 2026 inspection record card.

Photo 4 (left) extinguisher certification card on F508 and Photo 5 (right) inspection card on PM29.

**Defect 4 (Mitigated)**

On arrival at the wayside work location, WMSC Inspectors and the Metrorail safety inspector observed four members of the work crew not wearing safety glasses. Metrorail Operating Rulebook Section 17.11.3 states all personnel are required to wear safety glasses while on the roadway. The Metrorail safety inspector instructed each worker without safety eyewear to stop working and put on the required protective eyewear before returning to work. All workers had eyewear protection available at the work location and complied with the request.

**Hazard Rating: 1B**

**Defect 5 (Partially Mitigated)**

WMSC Inspectors reviewed the Roadway Job Safety Briefings forms completed by two roadway work crew leaders. Specifically, the Employees-in-Charge of the Piggyback Work Crews (The Piggyback work crew leaders are also referred to as Junior RWICs by Metrorail),



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who were under Exclusive Track Occupancy (ETO)<sup>3</sup> Joint Occupancy protection. The following defects were observed as it relates to:

1. Track Speeds were not listed on the briefing form of one of the two Junior RWICs' sheets. (Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) 17.5.4.)
2. Placement of Watchmen and rotation and relief policy is required to be indicated on the form. However, this information was missing from the briefing form of one of the two Junior RWICs' sheet. (Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) 17.5.4.)
3. MOR Section 17.5.3 states Roadway Job Safety Briefings are not complete until each roadway worker signs the briefing. WMSC Inspectors observed that the briefing of one of the two Junior RWICs did not comply with this requirement and was missing signatures. When the WMSC reviewed the document and noted the missing signatures to the Junior RWIC onsite, this was mitigated immediately.

## Photos

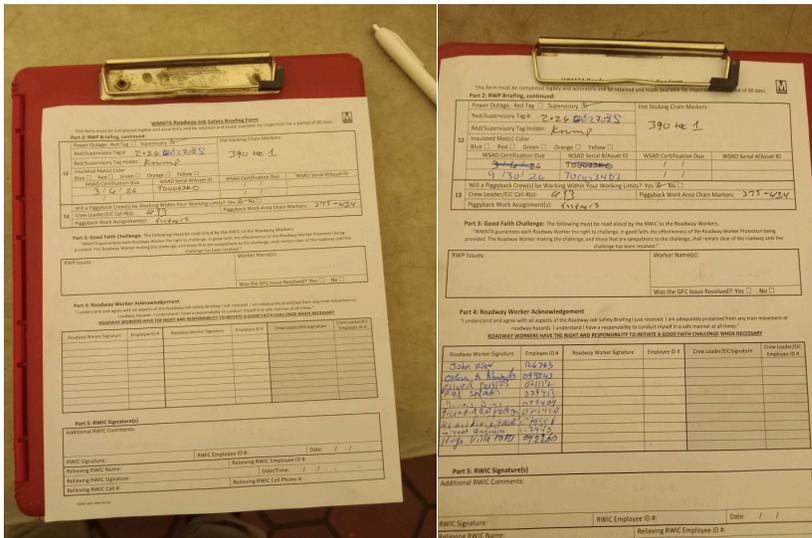


Photo 6 (left): job safety briefing missing signatures. Photo 7 (right) job briefing after the crew signed.

## Hazard Rating: 1B

<sup>3</sup> Exclusive Track Occupancy (ETO): A method of establishing working limits on controlled track in which the movement authority of trains and other equipment is withheld by the rail traffic controller or interlocking operator or restricted by flagman. The authority for movement of rail vehicles within the working limits rests solely with the RWIC of said limits. (Source: Metrorail Operating Rulebook.)



### **Defect 6**

The Watchman/Lookout was missing required safety equipment: airhorn, whistle, and the W-disc. (MOR 17.8.4.e)

**Hazard Rating: 1B**

### **Next Steps**

Please respond **by Monday, March 9, 2026**, to acknowledge receipt and to convey responses to the WMSC regarding what, if any, actions will be or have been taken in response.