



WMSC Inspection Report 20260403A

ISSUED 04/06/2026

Inspection Details

Title: Branch Ave Yard (F99) Roadway Worker Protection Inspection

Location: Branch Ave Yard (F99)

Date of Inspection: 4/3/2026

Time of Inspection: 8:00am to 8:30am

Unannounced

Risk-Based (Inspection, Data Review)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection

Hazard Rating: 1B

Overview

On October 31, 2024, the Federal Transit Administration issued the new Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) rule ([49 CFR Part 671](#)). The new rule establishes the first ever federal “minimum safety standards for rail transit Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) to ensure the safe operation of public transportation systems and to prevent safety events, fatalities, and injuries to transit workers who may access the roadway in the performance of work.” (49 CFR section 671.3.) On December 2, 2024, the rule took effect, and rail transit agencies were required to achieve a state safety oversight agency-approved roadway worker protection program by December 2, 2025. Metrorail received WMSC approval of its new program that complies with FTA’s Part 671 on December 1, 2025.

Since the WMSC’s approval of WMATA Metrorail’s RWP program in December 2025, Metrorail has been conducting transition training for all relevant workers on the new RWP program. This training covers all the new or changed rules that took effect on April 1, 2026. That is, the new Roadway Worker Program officially replaced the legacy program on April 1.

Since the inception of the WMSC’s current Inspection Program in November 2024, roadway worker protection defects have comprised one-third of all defects identified by WMSC Inspectors. Adherence to roadway worker protection rules is critical to the safety of roadway workers and is therefore a continued focus area of the WMSC’s oversight activities.



Metrorail certifies roadway workers as being proficient by affixing a special sticker to Metrorail employees' OneBadges¹ so that other personnel may identify that the worker has received the required RWP training and is knowledgeable with RWP rules. Metrorail confirms roadway workers are proficient in the new program requirements by affixing a special sticker denoted by "TT" to their OneBadge. Workers not possessing the correct sticker affixed to their OneBadge are not permitted on the roadway until they demonstrate their knowledge of the new program via training and testing and thus receive a specific sticker confirming satisfaction of this requirement.

On April 3, 2026, WMSC Inspectors carried out a roadway worker program inspection at Branch Ave Yard (F99). WMSC Inspectors observed track personnel performing work activities and requested to verify that their OneBadges were affixed with an RWP qualification transition training (TT) sticker. Additionally, WMSC Inspectors assessed the RWP practices conducted by the roadway workers on-site at the time.

After concluding the inspection, WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with the Rail Transportation Superintendent, 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 (mitigated)

WMSC Inspectors requested to see the OneBadges for the two workers that were performing Yard track inspections. One employee was in possession of the OneBadge with the TT sticker, and the second was not in possession of their OneBadge. The Metrorail employee who did not have the OneBadge in their possession at the time of the inspection told the WMSC Inspectors that the badge was located in the worker's vehicle. The employee then retrieved the badge with the TT sticker, and WMSC Inspectors confirmed that the correct stickers were affixed and therefore that the employee was knowledgeable qualified to conduct roadway worker duties.

Hazard Rating: 1B

¹ WMATA's OneBadge is the official identification method at WMATA and is the only identification card used and recognized by employees and contractors.



Defect 2

The WMSC requested to review the On-Track Safety Briefing Form and the roadway workers present informed that the roadway worker in charge (RWIC) was not on track with the crew but was instead in the restroom. The RWIC that was not on track with the work crew was also identified as the watchperson.

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.19.4

“Where moving rail vehicles are present within working limits, a Watchperson must be utilized to provide warning of rail vehicle movement.”

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.6. (c) “Watchperson Responsibilities”

“Ensuring all roadway workers being afforded protection occupy a place of safety should a situation arise where the Watchperson would be distracted from their duties.”

Hazard Rating: 1B

Defect 3

The On-Track Safety Briefing Form presented to the inspection team was not signed by the roadway worker in charge (RWIC). (See Photo 1)

Photos

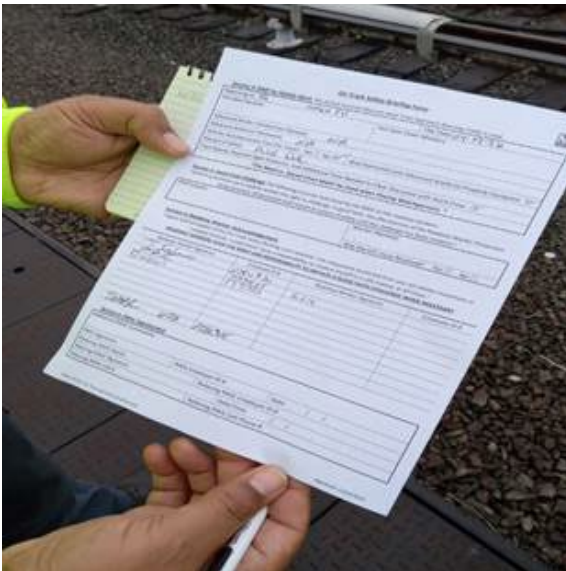


Photo 1: RWPM 1.8.4 On-Track Safety Briefing.



On-Track Safety Briefings are not complete until all members of the roadway work crew sign the briefing and acknowledge understanding the on-track safety being afforded to them, and that all on-track safety concerns have been addressed.

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.8.4

“On-Track Safety Briefings are not complete until all members of the roadway work crew sign the briefing and acknowledges understanding the on-track safety being afforded to them and all on-track safety concerns have been addressed.”

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.9.7

“After the current RWIC has verified all the information on the form is accurate, they are to enter the following on the “Signing Off” line:

- Name (printed)
- Signature, and
- Employee Identification Number”

Hazard Rating: 1B

Defect 4

The On-Track Safety Briefing identified that the crew was using Train Approach Warning (TAW) as their form of roadway worker protection. TAW requires the use of a watchperson (See section 1.25.6 of RWP Manual “Placement of Watchperson” under 1.25 “Train Approach Warning (Mobile Work Crew)”). The roadway worker in charge identified themselves as the watchperson but was not in possession of the required safety equipment. The watchperson did not have a W-DISK or an Air Horn.

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.18.2

“Watchpersons must use the whistle board (W-Disk) in conjunction with a whistle, air horn, or physical tap to warn roadway workers of approaching rail vehicles to provide ample time to workers.”

Roadway Worker Protection Manual, section 1.18.3



“Watchpersons must sound the air horn or whistle while holding the whistle board overhead to signal roadway workers of approaching rail vehicle(s) and to clear the track and remain in a place of safety.”

Hazard Rating: 1B

Photos

Watchperson PPE and Equipment

SAKE-03-05/19 RWP Watchperson
Initial PPT Rev 0, 12/1/2025
Module 2: PPE and Equipment

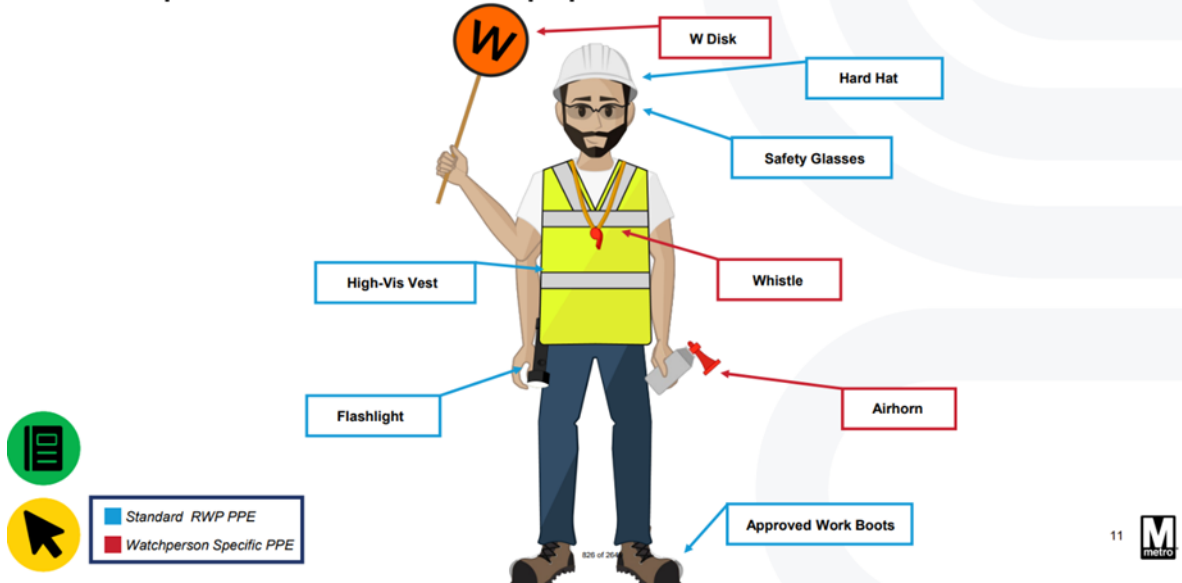


Photo 2: Watchperson PPE and Equipment Training Slide.



W Disk



Visual warning sign used by **Watchpersons** to warn Roadway Workers of an approaching train or other rail vehicles and signaling them to immediately move to a Place of Safety (POS).

Also used to provide a visual signal to workers letting them know it is safe to resume work.



Photo 3: W Disk Training Slide.

12 of 2019

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Air Horn



Audible warning used by **Watchpersons** to warn roadway workers of approaching train or other rail vehicles. Signals immediate movement to the Place of Safety (POS).



Photo 4: Air Horn Requirement Training Slide.

13 of 2019

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Defect 5

WMSC Inspectors observed a worker in the performance of the job wearing a backpack obstructing the reflective "X" on their safety outer wear (see photo 5).

Hazard Rating: 1B

Photos



Photo 5: Backpack obscuring the "X" on safety outer wear.

Next Steps

Please respond **by Thursday, April 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.